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COUNTRY CHURCH IN THE SOUTH

COUNTRY CHURCH IN THE SOUTH

ARRANGED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF MISSION STUDY CLASSES AND ALSO OF THE GENERAL READER.

BY

VICTOR I. MASTERS, D. D.

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Rural Church
Title
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Shepherd the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood.—Acts 20:28.

It is at least as important to save what we already have as it is to save that which is lost.—William E. Hatcher, D.D., LL.D.

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PREFACE.

This book is written in genuine sympathy with the subject it treats. The author speaks out of personal experience and observation and not from second-hand information. No more important subject has ever engaged the attention of our people than the adequate provision for the highest usefulness of our churches. Five generations have sent from the country to the urban life the purest and reddest blood of the denomination, and sadly much of it at too great an expense to the vitality of the rural churches. The ravages upon the country must be repaired. Like the soil needs resuscitation, which has given its vitality in the production of fruits of the fields, the churches must needs be fertilized again. Since the products of the fields can never be returned, a deeper share is sent down and a deeper soil is turned up, bringing into use the latent strength of the field. So must it be in the churches. The somewhat depleted fertility of the religious life must be restored by bringing into activity the latent forces in the churches from which our wealth has come.

In this most delightfully written book Dr. Masters has fairly treated this momentous matter, shedding light upon its problems from many angles and deriving conclusions that carry conviction upon their face.

It is not a country church problem. It is a Baptist problem. It is not enlistment. It is enlargement, enlightenment, enlivenment, enlistment, and cooperative fellowship. The city and village churches are responsible for dere-

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lictions in rural churches quite as much as if the derelictions were in their own respective churches. Church independence is overwrought when it is made the excuse to allow a church to die. Our churches are not democracies. They are theocracies. A democracy is a government of the people by the people for the people. A theocracy is a government in which all the laws are revealed from heaven and all the officers are called of God. A theocracy and a democracy are alike in the equality of all the people. "Equal rights to all and special privileges to none." But the democratic administration of our churches is misplaced whenever it is allowed to stand in the way of interference for good. And if democracy stood in the way, theocracy has the higher claim. As Dr. Masters shows with telling force, it is time to cease the annual Convention parade of our thousands of non-contributing churches and show a worthy Scriptural interest in these churches besides the tables of contributions.

Few books that have ever been written about the character and life of our churches are calculated to do so much good as this one. It is a book filled with a most interesting, instructive, and inspiring discussion of a vital theme. The author's diagnosis and treatment are scientific and deeply sympathetic. Where the surgeon's knife is keen and the incision is deep, the healing is antiseptic and soothing. There is no bombast nor ribaldry nor railing. It is a brother's book written about our brothers and sisters in Christ with the hope of making them more useful and more happy.

F. C. McCONNELL.

Atlanta, Georgia.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD.

This volume seeks to serve the cause of missions, but far more the cause of life. Given an abounding spiritual life in the churches, the support of Kingdom work will be sure and large. Given a poorly-fed, dwarfed life in the churches, high pressure appeals at their zenith will continue to elicit little from many churches and nothing from many others. It is missions to quicken the implanted life, to feed the sheep of the flock, though our popular definition does not include it as such. Largely because it does not, the situation has arisen to try to help and serve which the following chapters are written.

The country church has been and still is the great resource-field for Southern Baptists for almost all they possess as a denomination, except that there has not been a proportionate liberality among many rural churches in supporting co-operative missionary work. The one key by which this particular resource may be unlocked is adequate teaching. Before the country church can be depended on to furnish money freely for missions or, what is at least equally important, to supply resources adequate to inspire the life of the twentieth century community about it, it must first be cultivated as a field. Christian statesmanship invites us to the task. The latter clause of the Great Commission challenges us to it. Gratitude to the little rural church mother of nearly all we have and are wooes us to it. It is impossible to believe that a cause at once so great, so fundamental, and so enshrined in the universal heart of our

Southern Baptist people, shall not elicit from the denomination activities competent to serve its needs, once we give ourselves a chance to see the sore straits into which many of the rural churches have fallen.

In a recent article, Dr. J. M. Frost, Corresponding Secretary of our Sunday School Board, strikingly epitomizes the wonderful momentary advances which Southern Baptists have made in recent years. The field covered by his figures is that of Home and Foreign Missions and the Sunday School Board advances. In 1892 we gave $236,935 to these three causes. In 1916 to the same causes we gave $1,683,087—seven times as much! If Dr. Frost had included State Missions, the advance would have been still more impressive. Still, many of our people seem to be nervously looking about them to discover what is the matter. Whatever it is, it is such that neither marvelous financial advances nor unparalleled evangelistic successes seem able to satisfy them that all is well.

It is not the purpose of this book to show a near-cut way to more money for missions or other religious work. We are now using the shortest road there is, and it is great climb we have had of it up the hill. But the team appears to be tired and fretful. May it not be fit to scotch the wheels and bide a wee, while we consider whether more satisfactory progress may not be had and a larger load drawn with less strain, if we shall do a bit of grading and re-surfacing, and perhaps some re-location. Perhaps if we shall take a circuit around the next hill, it may enable us to bring a larger load to the destination with more ease and less fret and worry, and the farther way around may prove the nearest way for us—something we

accept in highway engineering, but have not acted on in furthering our religious activities.

Let us glance back down into the valley of 1892, trying not to get dizzy on our seven times higher elevation. Observe the straight uphill pull we have had over a road which in many places has suffered for lack of attention. Take a good straight look at the team and vehicle with which we have accomplished our climb. Forsaking the figure, consider in plain fact that the denomination which made this wonderful advance is made up of churches three-fourths of which meet for worship only once monthly. One-fourth of our churches are without a Sunday-school. Two-thirds of them have no Woman's Missionary Society. Three-fourths of them—nine-tenths of all the rural churches—are served by absentee pastors. These "pastors" not only do not live among their people and give the full powers of a God-called life to serving their needs, but the average term of service by the minister to one of these churches is probably less than three years. So that, beyond a casual acquaintance, the majority of rural church members are hardly known to the men whom God has called to feed the lambs and shepherd the flock!

Take one more look at our situation. It will not show, though it is a fact, that our uphill financial climb has been accomplished with thousands of churches carried as a dead weight. That is, they did not put forth any of the toil and sacrifice indicated in the wonderfully higher elevation we have reached. It will show that, while we climbed, a great host came to us by way of profession of faith, but that at the same time an alarming number forsook us, and departed into the paths of the world, which

deceitfully promise more ease in going. For the twenty years from 1896 to 1916, there came into Southern Baptist churches by baptism 2,333,000 persons. During the same period our apparent net increase was 1,156,000. But, in 1911, 50,000 Baptists came to us from southern Illinois, not by baptism, but as new members of our Southern body, so that the real net increase for the twenty years has been only 1,106,000, or 47.4 percent of as many as the entire number we have baptized in twenty years. As the loss by death has been 362,000, or 15.6 percent, our leakage from the churches by exclusion, etc., has been 865,000, or thirty-seven percent of as many as have been received by baptism. For every 100 we have baptized in twenty years we have now a net gain of forty-seven members, while fifteen have died and thirty-seven have been lost to us by exclusion, by erasure, or by the disappearance of churches. We have lost by leakage, at the top, sides, and bottom, nearly two and a half times as many as have died and more than one-third as many as we have baptized.

Southern Baptists will have to reckon with these startling figures, for they are profoundly significant of our condition—which is one of an unsurpassed evangelism, coupled with an unsurpassed neglect of the implanted life, and a failure to nurture it by adequate teaching, which our Lord commands that we shall do. For this 865,000 professed converts, who have disappeared from our church rolls, who have been lost to the world, to false faiths, and to other denominations, Southern Baptists must give an account to God and to their own consciences.

This book is written mainly to meet the needs of our own

Baptist people and seeks to set forth faithfully the actual conditions. There are two or three facts which should be remembered, especially by students of the country church in other sections of the country, who may quote statements from this book. The retarded condition of many rural churches in the South is not characteristic of any one denomination, but of the religious life of the section. There are more Baptists in the South than Christians of any other group and in this mainly consists the fact that our rural church problem is larger. The Civil War left the South prostrate and when it did begin its wonderful new career of material progress, farming was the last pursuit to share in the advance. Rural churches, which are everywhere conservative about making changes, by long years of enforced conformity to slow pioneer habits, at last became almost crystallized in an outworn program. The fair-minded student, however, will need to consider that even under such handicaps rural Christendom in the South has been singularly free from the actual decadence and death of its churches. These have shown a remarkable spiritual vitality. Not only so, the increasing though relatively small number of Southern rural churches which have already shaken off the clog of outworn custom and equipped themselves for the adequate inspiration of modern rural life, are a foretoken of a great country church advance in the South, once there shall be directed to the subject that degree of comprehension and earnest purpose which it abundantly merits.

I have received valuable suggestions from a number of books on the country church and on country life, which are given in the Bibliography, particularly "The Country Town," by Wilbert L. Anderson, "The Challenge of the

Country," by G. Walter Fiske, "The Church and Country Life," edited by Paul L. Vogt, and an admirable little pamphlet, "The Rural Church Program," by Charles King. I am especially under obligation to members of the Home Mission Board and other friends who have read the manuscript and offered suggestions which make the work more complete and useful. These were, Drs. Charles W. Daniel, F. C. McConnell, W. H. Major and S. Y. Jameson, of the local membership of the Board; Dr. Livingston Johnson, State member of the Board in North Carolina; Dr. J. J. Taylor, of Savannah, Georgia; Dr. C. C. Brown, of Columbia, South Carolina, and Dr. C. L. Greaves, of Lumberton, North Carolina.

May the generous reception these friends have accorded the modest effort be a foretoken of the warmth with which our people everywhere shall open their hearts to the sustained appeal of the country church in the South.

VICTOR I. MASTERS.

Atlanta, Georgia, November 1, 1916.

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Why are we focusing our attention on the rural life of the nation? Because it not only includes over one-half of the population of this country, but it also represents the great resource field of the nation's wealth. It is here also we discover such splendid heroic individuality as has produced the largest percentage of moral, religious, industrial, and political leadership of all the ages, and yet at the same time we discover national waste of resources, natural, human, and spiritual, because here we find the least of community interest and cooperation.—Professor Edwin L. Earp, of Madison, New Jersey, in the Church and Country Life.

What changes have so antiquated the old rural church? Generally speaking, those which might be expected in a virile, progressive nation, but especially the new agriculture and its concomitants,—better roads, rural mail routes, and modern country schools. Rural intelligence, as ever, ballasts the nation. One institution has lagged in the march—the country church. It is not in the front of the procession, as formerly. It will, however, more than gain its former prominence. The new country life movement, spreading over the nation, not only means a reconstructed rural life but one which will demand the highest type of Christian ministry. The ministry itself will be the chief pioneer of this new church life.—Ward Platt, D. D., Corresponding Secretary of the Northern Methodist Home Mission Board, Philadelphia.

CHAPTER I.

AN OUTLINE OF THE PROBLEM.

1. Can democracy be efficient in religion? It is assumed in this book that a religious democracy may be efficient in all things required for satisfactory service to our Lord and his Kingdom. Like all things else in Christian faith, this is being prominently questioned and an adequate answer to the question is a polemic which Baptists greatly need at this time. This work, however, aspires only to point the way to our greater adequacy in a specific field. In business and governmental realms recent thought has been much centered on efficiency, and in religious circles there is a vigorous movement to take over the dogma which it is claimed has proven best in directing industry and nations. It will be a day of mourning for humanity when it is granted that centralization and the rule of overlords is more efficient than democracy in the realms of government and industry. But it is sufficient for our present purpose to declare that the Kingdom of Christ is not of this world, nor is his standard of efficiency of this world.

2. Not from top to bottom, but from bottom to top. Our Lord's plan is to develop the personal powers and ideals of saved men and women, and through them to permeate society, and not through some kingly or ecclesiastical head to devise subtle schemes of conquest, and drive the individual as an automaton in their execution. Of all religious groups Baptists are the chief sponsors for the

principle of democracy, and its destruction would be their undoing. In the pressure for recognition in the religious world of an efficiency born of man's wisdom, many of our Baptist people are becoming restive. On the one hand, there are some among our most progressive people who are so anxious to go forward that they are in danger of adopting what seems to be the quickest route to larger tangible results, regardless of other considerations. They sometimes become impatient with that large group of churches which seem almost or quite untouched by a desire to render larger service, and in some instances are quick to criticise those who seek to cultivate a more Scriptural and sympathetic understanding of this great multitude. And yet a comprehending love and helpfulness is the only possible means by which the progressive element in our democracy can maintain fellowship with the non-progressive element. Over against this keen body of progressives is a group of thousands of churches, including hundreds of thousands of members, who, in their pioneer insulation from the currents of thought and spirit in the denomination, are oblivious to the fact that there is any problem at all, or that anybody is worrying about their condition. Truly it is a crisis and its elements are not sufficiently understood. In these chapters an earnest effort is made to have a look-in on one of its largest and least realized manifestations.

3. Saving by teaching. Another assumption which underlies this book is that the teaching principle is imbedded in the gospel by the side of the principle of evangelism, and that the New Testament requires its application by the same mandates as those which support evangelism. Souls are saved through the instrumentality of evangelism, but the new life must be nutured through the instrumentality of

teaching. From the first, among American Baptists there has been an inner circle with vision to see and wisdom to put in practice this principle. But at various stages, either opposition, or far-extending inertia, or both, have been so strong that until now, with few exceptions, only particular applications have been made of this doctrine. Schools to educate preachers and others have been established, but even the majority of the preachers have remained uneducated. Sunday-schools have been fostered, but in 1916 more than one-fourth of our churches were still without Sunday-schools. Women's mission societies have been developed, but so great has been the conservatism of the churches concerning educational effort, that the admirable zeal of our women leaders has as yet succeeded in establishing the societies in only one-third of the churches. If the local church is supreme, the importance of a local habitat for it increases, but while we preach its supremacy one-sixth of all our churches have no house of worship. Of all denominations our Baptist democracy renders us most dependent on sufficient pastoral instruction in the churches, and yet, in 1916, about three-fourths of our churches had preaching only once monthly and nearly three-fourths of them had no resident pastor! Our educational efforts have been large and successful, the Sunday-schools and women's societies are multiplying and making cheering advances. But our very successes in particular efforts are gradually forcing us to see that we have grievously fallen below the mark in our lack of insistence upon a program of teaching adapted to fit the needs of the whole membership of the churches. That we are in the twentieth century making no sustained effort to deal with the startling fact that three-fourths of our churches are served only once a month and as many by

absentee pastors, convicts us of not having taken seriously the teaching program of our Lord and his Apostles. Baptist individualism has accepted the task of helping poor, blind sinners to find the light, but has generally balked at putting forth effort to instruct them in the meaning of the things which the light sets before their eyes.

4. The New Testament on instructing the disciples. Jesus, who spake as never man spake, taught his own disciples daily for three years. It would take ninety-one years for a once-a-month church to provide as many hours of instruction as there were days in our Lord's three years of teaching. When he ascended, in his last utterance on earth he declared that "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" was an essential condition on which his followers might claim his promise, "and, behold, I am with you all the days, to the end of the age." His command to Peter, "feed my sheep," expresses the purpose of the Commission, as well as his command to Paul to go far hence to the Gentiles with the glad news. The nurture of the new life was a great concern to Paul, who gave continued effort to "the care of all the churches," who, instead of monthly, preached both day and night for three years at Ephesus, and who in some places apparently appointed several pastors for the local church, in order to provide adequate teaching. His farewell words to the elders of the church at Ephesus were, "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock to feed the church of God," for "grievous wolves will enter in among you." Grievous wolves there are today, "not sparing the flock." But, so far, we usually only shrug our shoulders, and adhere to the near-starvation plan of preaching once-a-month by a "shepherd" who resides afar from the fold. Can a re-

ligious democracy, which in readjustments and tangible results ever seems to move too slowly to satisfy the exacting demands of an electric age—can it rise to the performance of the long-neglected task of saving by teaching? This book gives an affirmative answer. It can also be demonstrated that democracy secures valuable efficiency results which the scientific experts do not set forth in their survey charts, nor even comprehend.

5. Persisting pioneer practice. The problems of the country church arise out of its failure adequately to inspire and serve the life of the country community in our industrial civilization. While material progress has been tenfold since the day of the backwoods, for the most part the rural churches have held on to the methods and practices of the pioneer fathers. There is pathos in this situation. Once the once-a-month service by the unpaid or poorly paid absentee pastor, who visited the community each month and held a protracted meeting in the summer, was measurably adequate to keep the thoughts of the people on God and righteousness. There were times when the community was aroused by the holy fervor of faith. To-day faithful old men and women on the front seats are hurt in their souls to feel that the church's message somehow seems to be losing its old-time power with the younger generation, and they sigh for the times of refreshing which they once knew. The absentee pastor still comes once a month as of yore. The population is two or three times as large and the community far more prosperous, while the church attendance is often no larger, or actually smaller, and the minds of the young people are so full of other things that the monthly sermon by the preacher from the next county or the town often does not seem to impress them.

Such is the common manifestation of the country church problem in the South, though the churches themselves do not call it a problem.

6. The pioneer past. More than any other pioneersmen in history, the early American settlers were religious. Many of them came to the American wilds that they might have religious liberty, and one of their purposes, which they expressed in the fundamental law of many Colonies, was the spread of the gospel. Everywhere in the Old-South Colonies the hardy preacher journeyed with the people into the backwoods, where they hewed down the forests and built their settlements, or else he soon sought out the settlements by way of the wilderness path, and established churches. He came once a month or less often and his advent brought to the community almost the only news it received from the outside world. These preachers received genuine appreciation from the people and unbounded hospitality, but almost never any money. Another day came, in which settlement had joined settlement, and the vast primeval forests in between were disappearing. They were building railways between strategic points, and towns had sprung up in many places. With ninety percent of the people still in the country, the rural church persisted in the old way. The church now called its pastor, instead of waiting, as many of the earliest churches did, for the volunteer service of devoted men. Some of the churches even promised a modest salary compensation, while others agreed to give as the Spirit should lead them, and then usually forgot the compact.

7. This is inadequate. The pioneer practice of the churches reduced almost to the minimum the possibilities for teaching the people of God in all the ways of the Lord.

It was inadequate for the needs of those earliest days, though it was richly blessed of God. Jesse Mercer, the distinguished Georgian, after whom Mercer University was named, preached to once-a-month churches, riding across country to his appointments. He clearly saw and lamented the insufficiency of the system, and declared that the churches could never be brought forward into a full Christian life and service until this practice should be discarded. When due consideration is had of the amazing advances since then in material civilization, it is almost beyond belief that the great mass of country churches in the South after almost another century are still holding on to their frontier custom. What would Jesse Mercer think if he could know that, after all these years and all the boasted progress of society, the social institution which serves the deepest and highest needs of the large majority of the people of the South, is for the most part to-day meandering along in the same make-shift methods which our ancestors adopted when they came into the virgin forests of the American wilds! To assume that monthly preaching by absentee preachers can possibly shoot through with spiritual dynamic the country life of the South to-day, betrays either lack of judgment or a reprehensible indifference to a religious problem of the first rank.

8. Conditions in other sections. It seems desirable to indicate the chief differences between the problem in the South and in other sections. Country life problems reached a critical stage in America first in New England, and next in the Middle West. When the country church was discovered to be crucial in the composing of the troubles of country life, it had already gone into decay or to its death in scores of communities. Therefore the abounding coun-

try church books of recent years speak largely in an unknown tongue to the Southerner, just so soon as they cease to deal in general principles and come down to specific cases. The authors have a habit of writing as if they spoke for the whole nation, instead of only their section of it. This is confusing—especially to a Southerner, whose section contains one-half the entire number of rural churches in America. The well-informed Southerner knows that the chief rural church problem of the South is not decadence, but retarded growth. Churches which can live for a hundred years on the almost-starvation diet of once-a-month preaching, certainly have an amazing vitality. What might not such churches do, if they could be aroused to a sense of their obligations and opportunities!

9. A crucial question. The North and Middle West would seem to have awakened to the country church problem after it is almost too late to do more than a salvage service. They tell us of hundreds of country churches in one State and another which have been abandoned. Some writers are much given to recommending heroic measures for re-establishing the prestige of the church, including a social service emphasis so large that it seems to confess that the spiritual in the gospel message has not in it the power to hold men, or a proposition for uniting the remnants of various churches into a union church, along with arguments to discredit the troublesome and pestiferous consciences of people that may make the program difficult of accomplishment. Southern Christians are under obligation to their Northern brethren for the literature on country church problems. It has helped to arouse us in good time to take care of our own rural religious situation. In the South there is undoubtedly every reason to believe the prob-

lem of the rural church may be solved, and its life and service made competent to inspire the abounding rural life of this section, if the Christian people will take hold of it in a large and serious way. In the North and Middle West only about one-third of the population is rural; in the South three-fourths of the population is rural. The question is important in other sections; it is crucial in the South. A satisfying rural life here will mean a high civilization; but a sordid rural life of money-gathering and pleasure-seeking, uninspired and unchastened by the mandates and hopes of Christian faith and purpose, will mean farewell to the best traditions of the South, and to the patriotic and sacred destiny for which our noblest and best have prophesied and prayed that the South should be made fit.

10. Stimulating Northern progress. In December, 1915, the Church and Country Life Conference, held by the Federal Council, at Columbus, Ohio, marked a real advance among Christian bodies in the North and Middle West in grappling with the country church problem. While some of the distinguished speakers were still grinding in the treadmill of unionism shibboleths and artificial social service prescriptions by men who do not seem to understand rural life, the report of this Conference also includes probably the most stimulating and inspiring body of information which has until now been brought together. The report is published in an attractive volume, "The Church and Country Life," and is available for students. It shows that the Northern bodies are really beginning to grapple with the titanic task, and the querulous criticism and fault-finding which have characterized most of their printed reports, is now giving place to joyous and stimulating demonstration in not a few rural communities. It is refreshing to note that

these demonstrations and the Conference addresses which grip the reader are almost without exception by pastors or by leaders who are the responsible representatives of some Christian denomination—which denominations the expert liberal theorists in the Conference still continue to condemn as the fountain head of rural church inertia. It appears that the North is passing from the period of gestation to active demonstration almost before we of the South, whose rural life is relatively far larger, have more than planted the seeds that may eventually fruit in an earnest and adequate rural church program. We congratulate our Northern neighbors, whose progress in this direction we trust may speed our own awakening.

11. A doctrinal deposit. George Whitefield did much to save Baptists from Arminianism, and Shubal Stearns to introduce among them that fervor and passion to win lost men which has saved all of them, except the most confirmed Hardshells, from the fatuous doctrine that it is an impertinent interference with the prerogative and power of God to beg a sinner to accept Christ. The passion of Southern Baptists for winning the lost has been almost unbounded. But hyper-Calvinism has gotten its innings at other points. One of these has been and is a minifying of the fitness and necessity of human effort in saving the life for service, as well as in saving the soul from sin. It is still true with the average rural Baptist church in the South that its idea is that the church's only business is to get sinners to accept Christ. Writers caricature these churches when they say that their whole idea is that they must warn men to "flee from the wrath to come." This is and always has been untrue of the great body of country churches. Their religious concepts have been true, but,

alas! they have remained in the region of a b c principles, and have never given themselves the opportunity to appreciate and appropriate the deeper thought of service for God and humanity. The polemic and abstract doctrines our individualistic pioneer fathers found appetizing, but there was no thoroughfare in the direction of lives trained for service. They were unconscious of such needs, but were less reprehensible than we shall be if we do not fit our churches and ourselves to show forth the spirit and power of the gospel in the service of the community and the world. They shouted over souls born into the Kingdom in the summer protracted meeting, but suitable provision to train the young converts did not exercise their thoughts: God would do that.

12. A human element. Self-reliance, independence, strong individualism, have their favored home with the American countryman. His singular inaptitude for social action has come from these quailties and from the isolation which makes social contact and practice difficult. The farmer has a penchant for party politics, but when he joins a church he so arranges it that his engagement will not take much of his time. Beyond this, his social action has not ordinarily reached. His individualism is such that he is with great difficulty brought to follow a local leader or undertake the leadership of others. This fact makes one of the greatest difficulties in the country church problem. Source of most of that fine human material which, trained in the college or urban community, furnishes the leadership of city and nation, it is one of the ironies of rural life that the leadership for its own betterment must be drawn largely from some other than a rural circle. If it may thus help in the rural task, the city will return to the country some of the abundance which it has received from it.

I doubt if it would.

13. Past fine service. Emphasis should be placed on the fine service to society at large which the country church has rendered. In furnishing the simple program which has inspired most of our citizenship with the spirit of law and order and with reverence for God and love and justice toward men, the peripatetic preacher of the frontier, the country preacher of later days, and the country church, have been and still are the principal integrating forces of society in the South. They are the hoops to the social barrel. Religious faith added coolness to the nerve of the men who subdued the wilderness, and gave tenderness and reverence to those who otherwise in battling with the wilderness would have become wild and uncouth. In our own day the usefulness of the country church and country preacher as constructive social forces is far more than is generally recognized. A day which grasps its impressions of life from the headlines of daily newspapers, and is served by a press whose reporters hunt forever for the ephemeral and sensational in its urban tract and whose press despatches come over wires which run through but never start in or touch the country community, does not appreciate the large significance of the quiet formative forces which, in the open country, are forever giving shape to human life and habit.

14. Prohibition an instance. An instance of rural influence in the forces of public morality, which is now in everybody's memory, is prohibition. There are now in high places many friends of this cause. But when in certain highly reputed quarters it was fashionable to call prohibitionists long-haired fanatics, country preachers and quiet country churches swallowed the insult and stood to their guns, fighting the drink curse. The country preachers have

been the main force which has brought in the South the downfall of John Barleycorn. It was characteristic of the urban failure to understand its rural debt that, when at last some great newspapers, which had long sneered at the prohibition propaganda, were forced to take cognizance of the changed public sentiment, they ignored the significance of the quiet moral forces which had long wrought in the countryside, and attributed the reform to the intelligent self-interest of great business concerns, which now began to say that they would no longer employ men who drank. The righteous resentment which many a modest country preacher and layman felt at this perversion of truth by dense oracles in high places found no voice. It is, unfortunately for the common welfare, a habit of the country community to be without a voice in the daily counsels of the public, though it is a producer of moral values of prime importance. In this voicelessness consists most of the pathos of country life and country church problems.

15. Outstripped by material progress. Material progress in the country has gone a hundred miles while the country church has not yet decided whether it would take a leisurely stroll down to the spring. The church has marked time, while population has doubled and farm practice has gone forward tenfold. And in this implicitly are all the problems of the country church. It has dealt in eternal verities, and the material forces have dealt in the things which serve this present life, but while it has whispered in the far-away accents of last month's sermon, they have shouted into the farmer's ear every hour of every day, and their cry is so loud and insistent that they not seldom make him forget there was a sermon over at the church last month. When our mothers and grandmothers used

the hand-loom and spinning wheel, they accompanied the hum of the wheel by the quaint and soul-stirring melodies which they had heard at the church. Exit now the spinning wheel; enter the automobile, whose nervous hum at the gate speaks of friends to be visited, of city shops, of sylvan beauties afar by the roadside. No longer does the countryman fill in the vacant hours of a month digesting the one sermon he heard during the month in the single assembly of men which has met within his reach. But the pioneer church, with its practice little changed, goes on its traditional way, wondering what it all means. It means that modern life goes forward on springs and cushions over good roads by gasoline; while pioneer life went forward by ox-cart over cobble-stones and gullies. Can the church live in the dead past?

16. Slow to understand. The country church has been slow to grasp the meaning of these changes. With admirable tenacity it has clung to its faith that only the gospel of Christ can save men in any day. In this our churches have done better than some at the North, which, in their confusion, have seemed ready to substitute a social service program, of which experts told them, for a religion which never forgets to go back to the task of bringing men into right relations with God. Our churches begin to realize that something is wrong, but few of them have come to definite diagnosis, and far fewer to adequate treatment. The religious needs of humanity are fundamental and undying, and the souls of country people who drive automobiles and raise 200 bushels of corn to the acre will respond to the challenge of the spiritual to-day as surely as they did when they rode in ox-carts and raised fifteen bushels to the acre. But the challenge will have to be so strong and

sustained that so intensely occupied a man will come to know what the preacher and church are driving at. "The old time religion" song was not written by the pioneers we picture when we sing it, but by a later dreamer, whose vision was of a languid past, in which with hands folded in untroubled contemplation those red-blooded forerunners were supposed to comfort themselves by such inert sentimentalities. But the pioneer was another kind of person. Of all things, anaemic sentimentality found in him the least chance of an abiding place. For his life was given to the business of wilderness-conquering, and he was much of a man. His descendants have no wilderness to conquer. Among some of his more unfit descendants, we must look for the anaemic poets who confirm our later day in a fatal static indolence, seeking to glorify this laziness by crowning it with a halo from the past. The country church of to-day is in need of a red-blooded moral equivalent for the rugged manliness and efficiency of those wilderness-conquerors. Either let us go back to chopping down forests, fighting Indians, and plowing an ox across new-ground roots, or else, in very shame, forsake our indolent assumption of the sacredness of the once-a-month preaching in a log house. It was the best the pioneer could do. Would not such a man be ashamed of descendants who made his limitations an excuse for their confirmed indolence!

17. The Country Life Commission. The first voice of sufficient volume to be heard in America, which has spoken for the country church and country life, was from an extra-ecclesiastical source. The teeming country life and country church books have been written almost entirely since 1908, when President Roosevelt appointed a Country Life Commission. This Commission was made up of some of the

most distinguished men in America, but Congress did not hold it in high esteem. It did not provide compensation or even the traveling expenses of the members of the Commission. When its findings were reported Congress declined to have it printed, except a few copies for its own inspection, though it authorizes the printing of many thousands of pages of practically useless stuff every year. Perhaps these statesmen felt a certain resentment that any one should seek to render a service to the great body of country people, except that provided by their campaign speeches and the little packages of free garden seeds. But the President had correctly sensed what the public mind would be. The despised report of the Commission was soon in such general demand that a private publisher reproduced it, and it is still being sold broadcast and read, while the average free congressional publication continues to make the national trash-heap more forbidding.

18. What followed the report. The report aroused a great deal of interest in country people and life, or rather it became a center around which this interest began to crystallize into shape and purpose. Of the country church it said: "Any consideration of the problem of rural life which leaves out of account the function and the possibilities of the country church, would be grossly inadequate. This is not only because, at the bottom, country life is a moral problem, or that in the best development of the individual, the great motives and results are religious and spiritual, but also because, from the purely sociological view, the church is fundamentally a necessary institution." Following this report, the Young Men's Christian Association, many State colleges, rural publicists, and others began a movement for country church and country life better-

ment. The agricultural colleges enlarged their scholastic concept from that of technical agriculture till it included country life interests of all sorts. Then there began to come from the press a stream of books on the country church. Until now, perhaps, only one or two of these has been by an author in intimate touch with the country church situation of a considerable religious body, and not one has been by a Southern writer, identified with one of the two denominations which together have approximately half of the country churches in America—the Methodists and the Baptists of the South. The agencies which serve the community react on one another very intimately in the country. Starting with any one of them, we soon find ourselves on the territory of the other. This is one of the most hopeful and satisfying characteristics of country problems. Like country people they neighbor with one another. There are economic and social problems in the country which profoundly affect the country church. In the chapters immediately following, some attention will be given to these, after which the purpose is to undertake a more detailed examination of elements of the problems which have their rise in the churches themselves and in the denominations to which they belong, and to suggest a program by which these evils may be lessened or cured.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER I.

1. What does the book assume as to religious democracy? What dogma from business and government are some religious circles seeking to take over? What principle would centralized efficiency sacrifice in religion?
2. What is our Lord's plan for saving society? Why are some progressive people in danger of forsaking democracy? What is the attitude of many at the other extreme?

3. What is assumed of the teaching principle in the gospel? To what extent have Baptists accepted this principle? Give the degree of organization and lack of it for the purpose of teaching? What has resulted from our very successes in particular fields with the teaching principle?
4. How long would it take a once-a-month preacher to give a church as much time for instruction as our Lord gave in three years? Give Scripture precepts and examples as to teaching. Can our Baptist democracy do the great teaching service needed by the churches?
5. From what do the county church problems arise? Picture the situation as it exists in many places today.
6. Portray the rural church of the pioneer period, and the period which followed it.
7. What did Jesse Mercer say about the inadequacy of once-a-month preaching? How does the practice of most rural churches now compare with that of Mercer's day?
8. Compare rural church conditions in the South and other sections. What proportion of the rural churches are in the South.
9. Give conditions in the North and Middle West. How do they differ in the South?
10. Give evidences of rural church progress at the North.
11. Name some doctrinal reasons for Baptist rural church backwardness.
12. What effect has the individualism of country people had on rural church progress?
13. What of the fine service country churches have rendered?
14. Tell what country preachers and churches have done for prohibition in the South. Have secular publicists given them due credit?
15. Compare country church practice with material progress.
16. Explain how the churches have been slow to understand the changes which affect them. Does the "Old time religion" song rightly represent the faith of the pioneers who settled the South? Will a quiescent, sentimental faith enable us to spiritualize rural life of to-day?
17. How was attention turned to the country church in Amer-

ica? Tell of the Country Life Commission and the attitude of Congress to it.

18. What followed the report of the Commission?

No question in Christian circles is more insistent than "What of the country church?" Just now it overshadows discussion concerning city conditions. The case diagnosed shows the utter dependence of the city on the country. So helpless is the city in relation to the country that a possible separation would bankrupt the city,—materially, intellectually, and morally, and this in short order. This makes clear the debt of the city to the country. The city has exploited it. Its monstrous maw has with reckless prodigality swallowed and wasted the resources of the open country until now the city is in danger because of these depleted sources of life. Not only has the city preyed on the country; it has urbanized it. It has replaced the ideals of the country with those of the city. In dress, social life, recreation, home life, the country counts progress as an approximation to city standards. All this must be changed or our national foundations will be undermined.—Ward Platt, D. D., Secretary Northern Methodist Home Mission Board.

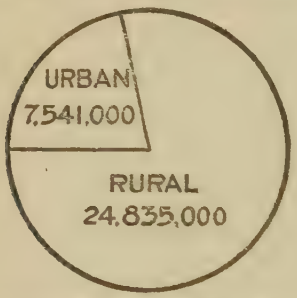
CHAPTER II.

COUNTRY LIFE.

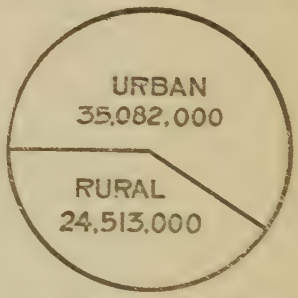
1. Thrives in the South. The South has always been a section in which the characteristic life was rural and the leading pursuit farming. The city-pull which the whole world has felt during the last generation has been felt in the South, but not enough to jeopardize the preponderance of rural life. In the ante-bellum period the attractive social life of the South was mainly a rural development. Poverty modified this condition after the Civil War, and the more recent townward trend has tended to eclipse the attractions of the old plantation life, but the new civilization of to-day, has brought a new rural civilization, and there is again a wholesome tendency to make the life of the country as attractive and satisfying as it was in the former days. Country life and those things which condition it make up the environment which the rural church must serve. It is proposed here to treat briefly some of the outstanding problems which affect rural life.

2. Its predominance. More than half of the people of America still live in the open country or in small towns, and three-fourths of the people in the South are country-dwellers. The census of 1910 gives the South a slightly larger rural population than that of all of the rest of the country, though it has only one-fifth of the urban population. Omitting Missouri and Maryland, which are more largely urban, the rural population of the South is eighty percent of the whole. Including these States, it is seventy-

seven percent. From forty-four percent of the farming lands of America, valued at over $12,000,000,000, the South's farmers in 1912, according to the Manufacturers' Record, gathered products valued at $3,297,000,000. Great as are these figures, Southern agriculture is destined to more than double its value. The Southern States, with their salubrious climate and great variety of grains, fruits and vegetables, can feed the nation. With their fleecy cotton they can clothe it, and from their pine forests they can house it. The charts produced herewith show graphically the large predominance of rural life in the South. Along with the cityward pull, there has, in recent years, de-



RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION IN THE SOUTH



RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION IN THE REST OF THE COUNTRY

veloped a healthy reaction in favor of country life. Whatever may be the economic and social forces which shall yet press upon the people of this country, it is certain that in the South for generations the majority of the population will continue to live in the country. In the South with one-third the area and population of the country, the Christian bodies are responsible for the religious inspiration and enlargement of one-half the rural population of the nation —that population from which until now most of the men

and women who lead the great and useful tasks of society have come.

3. Rural life is fundamental. Thinkers of every age have declared that a stable and dependable rural civilization is essential to the welfare of nations and peoples. Long ago a Chinese sage observed that, "The well-being of the people is like a tree. Agriculture is the root, manufactures and commerce are its branches and fruit. If the root is injured, the leaves fall, the branches break away, and the tree dies." Daniel Webster declared: "The farmers are the founders of civilization. I am not anxious to accelerate the approach of the period when the great mass of American labor shall not find its employment in the field, when the young men of the country shall be obliged to shut their eyes upon external nature, upon the heavens and the earth, and immerse themselves in close and unwholesome workshops; when they shall be obliged to shut their ears to the bleatings of their own flocks, and the voice of the lark that cheers them at their own plows, that they may open them in dust and smoke and steam to the perpetual whirl of spools and spindles, and the grating of rasps and saws." In the Country Life Commission report, President Roosevelt wrote: "We were founded as a nation of farmers, and the welfare of the whole community still depends upon the welfare of the farmer. The strengthening of country life is the strengthening of the nation." The greatness and resourcefulness of the American people can be largely traced to the self-reliance, the physical stamina, and the stalwart moral force of men who learned the conditions of success in a youth nurtured in the open country, away from the ephemeral interests and unwholesome excitements of the city. No Republic such as ours can

endure without maintaining a high and satisfying rural life.

4. Forces of the new civilization. The problems of rural life have been brought about by the social and economic adjustments which followed the coming of the new civilization. The new civilization has been brought by power machinery, transportation, and inter-communication. When Stephenson invented the steam engine and Robert Fulton the steamboat, they little dreamed that they were the harbingers of a new day which should turn topsy-turvy the whole ordered life of civilization, but so they were. They were only the first of a long line of wizards who have dealt in mechanical power machines and through these changed the conditions of human life as much in seventy years as they had been changed in twenty centuries. Power machinery meant great factories; men must congregate about these, hence the city. Transportation meant an unprecedented interchange of products; there must be centers and terminals for handling this commerce, this meant more and larger cities. As the years passed, the machine on the farm so increased productively that one man could accomplish what had once required four or five. The factory pulled some countrymen and commerce drew others to the town tasks and life. The farm machine took a hand and in effect pushed yet others away from country paths to city streets.

5. The yeast of the world. The new yeast which is the ferment in rural life to-day is the world itself. The settlement of the pioneer was a little world unto itself. It adjusted its wants to its own power of production, and had little besides. The rural community of a more advanced period partook of the independence of the frontier settle-

ment more than it did of the inter-dependence of city life. Then one by one came the inventions which, as we say, brought the whole world into a single community. Singularly inept at forming group opinions and consciously adjusting itself in a united way to changed conditions, the country community was yet unable to escape from its full share of the impact of the strange new forces which were somehow changing everything. Once supported by its own products, it now found the world to be its market, both for selling and buying. To-day the farmer's cotton goes to the world's end, and from the world's end come much of his food and the comforts of his home.

6. The lure of the city. It is the city which makes acute the problems of country life. The city has numerous attractions, especially for the young. The present definite trend from the city back to the country indicates that with many these attractions do not stand the test of actual experience, but unfortunately it is a light about which a large proportion of those who disport themselves get their wings so singed that they find it a difficult task to fly again to the fields and forests, when they desire to go. The beauty of plate glass, attractive shop windows, and bright eyes in the hurrying throngs, makes the blood of the country boy or girl course more quickly through the veins. The city is to them an enchantress, a challenge to adventure. Men like to be where big things happen. They like to take big risks and explore the unexplored. In the city, powerful currents of life are forever crossing and recrossing. Also the city affords the setting in which a few of the most able will find the largest field for the exercise of their talents. Not all of the lure of the city is unwholesome, but the desire of every Christian patriot must be to unmask

to the untutored the fictitious and harmful in this appeal, and at the same time so to improve the conditions of rural life, that fewer will want to leave the country.

7. What the allured should know. Country youth who look upon the city as the door of opportunity and adventure, should know that for every one who makes a distinguished success in the city there are many who find their way to obscure tasks in the wilderness of its smoke and dust and noise and brick walls, and who usually earn no more than a meagre competency. The brilliant Dr. J. C. Hiden once said: "Men, like hogs, are bred in the country to be consumed in the towns." They should know (will they ever learn?) that a dollar on the farm will usually go as far as three or five dollars in the city in supplying their real needs, and that therefore the prospects of larger wages or salary are sure to prove deceptive and disappointing. Adventurous country boys should be taught by home and school and church that the incognito of city throngs, which allures by the appeal of romance, is a danger and a snare. It affords companions for amusement and dissipation, but scarcely a single sincere friend. Many who pass for friends are but mercenary acquaintances. The sense of irresponsibility which thrives in this atmosphere lessens the resistance of the inexperienced and makes it easy to do wrong. Farmers who rent their farms to tenants, and move to the city for the real or hoped for advantages of added comfort and social contact for the wife and family, should know that they shall probably find themselves only a fifth wheel in the new and noisy machine. The man who in the country community had become a strength and a stay to many, in the town often has no responsible business, and the experience of enjoying comforts created by others does not

satisfy him. He becomes lost in the crowd. The discontent which grows upon him is to his credit. He is too manly and strong to be satisfied to play the part of a parasite—who has been sufficient to his own needs and a tower of strength to others. The farmer's wife who purchases the social satisfactions of a town at such a cost to her husband, pays dearly for what she gets. She may own Sodom only in exchange for herself. At a less expenditure of money than the town adventure usually costs, she could equip and beautify her country home so that it would be the envy and admiration of every townsman so fortunate as to visit it.

8. Some needed changes. The city must continue to get from the countryside fresh blood for its tasks. This is normal and right, but it should be accomplished without putting a false glamour about the city and without minimizing the dignity and attractiveness of rural life. In order that our youth may not be drawn into the city on inadequate or fictitious grounds, some country practices need changing. One of these is that of getting a young woman from the city or town to teach the country school who thinks the country a rough place to live and who looks forward to getting away to the urban crowd as soon as possible. Impressionable children get from her their first dreams of the supposed fairyland of the great and mysterious city from which she comes, compared with which she evidently thinks the quiet country homes of the little dreamers tame and monotonous. The country community should quit making a hero of the boy or man who has come back from the city to visit the old friends. It is likely he is quite an inconsiderable figure in the city, if they only knew it, swallowed up among thousands who do not know that he is there and never will know, unless he should commit a crime

and "get into the papers." But the average country group receive their old comrade, now in new clothes and with quickened pace and alert eye, as if some aura of glory radiated from his person. Is it not possible to treat well the hungry home-visitor without seeming to say to every boy in the community that the way to become worthy of special attention is to leave the farm for the big city where they make auras of glory for country lads like him! Oh, the pity of it, that the big, toilsome, honest, deliberate, frank, kindly, country community should thus sell its soul to the alert, self-seeking, money-gathering, complacent, cold, calculating city! It is enough to make an angel weep. The welfare of society, both urban and rural, requires that the country community shall again find its soul and self-respect.

9. Country life humanizes. Human sympathy tends to become atrophied in the midst of city throngs, because the drama of life teems in such kaleidoscopic variety, such unlimited volume, that power to understand and feel for the joys and sorrows of others is overwhelmed and stupefied. One may have his own circle to whom go out sympathy and fellow feeling, but beyond this, human kindness and compassion are swallowed up in the hopelessness of understanding the surging human mass which moves on forever. Multiplied divisions and subdivisions of our sympathies make them next to impossible. Some one in the block where you live may face a tragedy, but you probably do not even know him. A funeral cortege moves through the congested street. It may be of a man you jostled on the sidewalk a week ago. You will never know, you will merely not see his face again. A home is in deep sorrow by the side of the street down which you ride on a car

to your office—several homes. But it is not your sorrow. At first, feeling guilty that even the tragedy of life and death around you does not seem to concern you, you grow to realize that when your time comes to drop out of this moving pageant, and you are carried to your humble home beneath the sod, the crowd will pass on and take no note, and even your few kindly friends will soon be pulled back from the hour in which they mourn your loss to their intense tasks, which often seem to get nowhere but which end in the grave. Or perhaps they cannot spare the hour, but will send flowers. In the country, your neighbors live within a radius of miles; in the city, the man under the same roof with you is often a stranger.

10. Why Henry Grady left New York. It is told that Henry Grady, the South's peerless orator, as a young man went with his bride to New York to be a reporter on a metropolitan newspaper. Coming from the cultured old town of Athens, Georgia, in which were and are the best traditions of the rural Old South in neighborship and hospitality, the anonymity of the individual in the great city oppressed his sensitive spirit. Leaving his boarding house one day after lunch, Grady saw a hearse standing in front of the next house, which was only separated from his by a brick wall, and down the steps came men carrying a little white coffin, and behind the figure of a woman in black. With hat off, Grady turned to his landlady, and in a subdued voice asked who was dead. "Shure, I don't know," she responded briskly, surprised at the question. Returning to his apartment, the young Georgian told his wife of the incident, and added, "My dear, I want to pack our trunks, and go back South, where even the humblest Negro in the community is something to me and I am some-

thing to him and where the tragedy of life and death beyond a thin partition wall cannot be a matter of indifference." And they came. Country life tends mightily to bring about a sense of neighborship and human fellowship whose mandates bridge the chasms of social convention, and make it easier to weep with them that weep and rejoice with them that rejoice. The South's famed hospitality and kindness to strangers are largely a fruit of its rural civilization. It is a thing precious beyond words, and to part with it for many great cities would be to bargain treasures of the spirit for the granitic spirit of commerce. A goodly land is that where "the milk of human kindness" flows along its thoroughfares.

11. The home of the home. There is no purpose here to idealize country life beyond that which is just, though its appeal has so few voices of utterance compared with the town that an ex parte statement would scarcely be amiss. But there are some things infinitely precious to mankind, the best fruition of which seems to depend upon the maintenance of a full and satisfying rural life. Central among these is the home. There are ideal homes in the city, and poor homes in the country, but the city tends toward the lessening of home influence and the actual demolition of the home, while in the country the domestic ties have their freest, fullest, and most blessed opportunities. In the country, where the family is most independent of others, the units of the family are most dependent upon each other. For help and companionship they look to each other, and each has his part in the common tasks which are performed for the welfare of the whole circle. In such a home love has its best chance to protect tender hearts and unsullied minds from those attacks and disillusionments which must

perhaps come in life, but which should be faced only after there has developed strength and judgment to withstand the assault. In the country, the forces of evil are unorganized and discountenanced, while in the city they are intrenched and shameless. Favored indeed is he whose early memories cluster around such a country home, with its chastening love, its simple interests, its wholesome outlet to nature and nature's lessons, and its tutelage in self-reliance. He has cast an anchor to the windward of inestimable value when the storms of temptation and trial shall come. The divorces which disgrace our civilization are not a rural-life development; nor are anarchy and those other anti-social forces which brazenly flaunt before mankind their creeds of selfishness and social disintegration. The open country is the most friendly atmosphere in which the home may perform its sacred function of nurturing and training citizens for the commonwealth and souls who shall serve men and glorify God. Statesmen, patriots, and every Christian worker should magnify the worth and seek to serve the ends of country life.

12. The farmer's changed environment. Within recent years, there has risen a well-defined purpose to study the interests of country life. From many sources, influences are gathering which are working to secure for rural life a fair share of the prizes of life that seem to be worth striving for, so that ambitious and capable young men and women shall find satisfaction in following agriculture, the most fundamental and permanent of human pursuits. The various changes which have been brought into rural life by the new civilization, have mightily contributed toward destroying isolation, the greatest of disadvantages on the farm. The National Agricultural Department, the farm

newspapers, and the agricultural colleges, found among the farmers that incomparably slow class-response to the efforts put forth for their welfare, which is characteristic of this great American individualist. But the strong walls of the farmer's ultra-conservatism are crumbling. His home is now open at last to "paper" information about farming, and so is his mind. His son goes to the farmer's college, and perhaps he himself attends the special summer lectures at the school or at the farmer's institute train on the sidetrack at the nearest town. Rural delivery of mail, good roads, the automobile, farm machinery, and the rural telephone, have worked wonders for him. Into his environment have entered things which change it from that which his father faced more than his father's surroundings differed from those of the first frontiersmen who hewed down the forests.

13. Help from the Government. For a long while American legislation was chiefly in the interests of business, industry, and commerce. It seemed to be considered that the farmer, whose calling was more fundamental than any of the others, could be left to shift for himself. Better counsels are recently prevailing, and legislation which will benefit agriculture and rural life is of frequent occurrence. Passing over the Morrill Act, which provides $50,000 annually for the agricultural college in each State, and the Hatch Act, which gives to each $30,000 annually for agricultural experiment station work, the Smith-Lever Agricultural Extension Act, of 1914, provides $4,580,000 annually as an appropriation to bring the results of agricultural research to the individual farmer. This money is to be divided in proportion to the rural population in the States, which means that the South will get practically one-half of it.

As it is available only on condition the various States raise an amount equal to the gift of the Government, this means the expenditure of nearly $5,000,000 yearly in the South and Southwest, or an average of about $270,000 in each State. No more far-reaching act has been passed in a generation. In addition, the present Congress has passed a rural credits law, a warehouse law, a grain-grading law, a national appropriation for good roads, and a cotton futures act. Besides which the Agricultural Department is expending about $20,000,000 annually in the interests of agriculture and country life. Verily, the farmer is coming into his own. This legislation and the unprecedented popularity of the agricultural colleges are bringing rapid and beneficent changes in American rural life conditions.

14. Farm machinery and science. The introduction of farm machinery and scientific farming have done much to lessen the back-breaking labor on the farm, and to increase the yield. One authority estimates that a single man can now produce as much on the farm as five men could produce sixty years ago. The large and spectacular steam plows are confined to the plains, but the reaper, the sulky plow, the tractor, and numberless other labor-saving contrivances are increasing throughout the land. There has been, in the last six or seven years, a large advance in the popularity of farmers' colleges in the South. Some of them, for a long time, trained farmers' sons to become civil and electrical engineers, rather than farmers. The lads, like their parents, were obsessed with the idea that farming could not be learned out of books, and that their own treadmill experience of farm routine was the whole story on that subject. A more damaging misconception to country life interests never existed, and hardly anything else has led

more bright boys from the farm to other pursuits. If initiative and brain work on the farm can reap a reward, capable young men will be interested and satisfied there. But thousands of them believed it was an endless routine, and left. One of the happiest omens now is that young men are learning that brains count on the farm more than in most places, for the farmer has no one to keep him from enjoying the fruits of his own ability, while the artisan or the business man may be restrained and repressed by an organization in which he is only a cog. The marvels of scientific agriculture have only begun. Dr. Andrew M. Soule, President of the Georgia State College of Agriculture, an agricultural authority of national reputation, in 1912 wrote: "To say that the agricultural production of the South will double, treble, or even quadruple within the lapse of another half century, is not stating the case extravagantly."

15. Driving out isolation. Loneliness has been the greatest single disadvantage in farm life. The last fifteen years have seen the introduction into rural life of mechanical appliances which have done an immense amount to dispel loneliness. There are the rural telephone and the automobile. The automobile has also been a great friend to good roads, and good roads in turn have made intercommunication easier for all classes. The rural telephone is now in use in almost every community in the land. The Southern Bell Telephone Company is authority for the statement that in 1916 there were in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and Alabama a total of 109,500 telephones in the open country and in small towns. If the rural population of other Southern States is served equally well, as there is reason to believe is true, there are approximately 346,000 rural telephones in this section, where before 1906

there were scarcely 500. Useful in a business way, the telephone is a social boon to the farmer's wife, the loneliness and endless routine of whose life has been a leading force in sending farm families to town. Now she can chat to any of her neighbors at any hour, or call up the daughter away at college, or the son clerking in some town. In 1914, the carriage manufacturers in America built 1,187,000 horse-drawn vehicles, valued at $135,000,000. In 1916 it was estimated that there were 3,000,000 automobiles in the country, valued at $2,100,000,000 and that the output for 1917 would be 1,000,000, valued at $700,000,000. A very large proportion of these machines are owned by farmers. Valuable for business reasons, in the country they are more valuable socially. The neighbor twenty miles away was formerly too far for a visit except on rare occasions. Now the country housewife may easily go as far or farther any afternoon, and be at home again in time for the evening household duties. Immense as is the size of our country, the present amazing speed of road improvement is such that the possible contact of the farmer with the world is multiplied many times. In 1914 the South spent $61,680,000 in road improvement, and had 84,000 miles of improved highways. The amount expended is increasing yearly. The telephone and the automobile and good roads mean not only greatly enlarged social contact, but an increase of mental alertness and of community life.

16. Rural mail delivery. More than 26,000,000 Americans on the farms are now served by the rural mail carriers. The number of letters written and of pieces of mail received regularly double and more on the rural routes after a year or two of use. The daily newspaper of the

metropolis is read by the farmer at the noon hour or earlier, and family magazines are received in homes where there is leisure to read and ability to think, whereas formerly the total of printed pages varied from the almanac and the county paper to these and just a little more. Rural mail delivery has also contributed to dispelling the loneliness of farm life. With approximately one-third the territory and of the population of the nation, forty-four percent of the entire number of families served by rural routes are in the South and Southwest. The number of routes in this section in 1916 was 16,191 and the number of families served was 11,690,151. The value of this service in quickening country life is almost incalculable. (See Appendix A).

17. Enlarging appreciation of farm life. The farmers' colleges are a barometer of an enlarging appreciation of country life. People have found that ability counts on the farm, that farm processes are fascinating if only one has the eyes to see, that the fresh air and changing seasons, the forests and birds and animals, the storm clouds and sunshine, are preferable to walls and clangor and smoke and dust and the patter of the feet of the human procession which never gets by. They have found that a bath-tub and electric lights and a water system, for which conveniences the urbanite allows himself to be so highly taxed, may be installed in the farm home without great expense, providing the urban conveniences while allowing the advantages the city does not give. They have found that a man makes a living in the city, and a life if he will, while in the country he makes his living and his life together. They have found that lockouts do not bother the farmer, nor can anybody dismiss him from his job. Nobody can starve him and his so long as God blesses the earth with the sunshine and the rain. Dif-

ficulties are yet to be surmounted to make rural life what it ought to be in several respects, but there is an increasing number of persons who believe in the advantages and are ready to tackle the difficulties. In many States, the agricultural colleges report that the proportion of young men from the cities among their students is equal to, and in some cases, larger than that from the farms. Sons of country-reared city fathers who have tried the city game and concluded it is not worth what it costs, are being encouraged by their fathers to prepare themselves for country life. Among the testimony given by many students of farmers' colleges, as recorded by Dr. Fiske in "The Challenge of the Country," I find this from a Cornell student: "I see nothing in the turmoil of city life to tempt me to leave the quiet calm and nearness to nature with which the farmer is surrounded. I also see just as great possibilities of financial success on the farm." Another said: "I think the farm offers the best opportunity for the ideal home. I believe that farming is farthest removed of any business from the blind struggle after money, and that the farmer with a modest capital can be rich in independence, contentment, and happiness." Many observers say the farm exodus to the city has been largely checked in the last few years. It is a favorable omen. It is the opportunity of the country church, whose laboratory for training human material for country and city and for world-tasks is the country community.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER II.

1. Describe the rural life record of the South.
2. Give percentage of rural and urban life in the South as compared with the rest of the country.

3. Quote a Chinese philosopher, Webster, and Roosevelt on the fundamental nature of rural life.
4. Tell how steam and power machinery affected rural life. Name three forces which sent people from the farm to the city.
5. Describe what the yeast of the world did as a rural ferment.
6. Describe the lure of the city. Name some of its attractions. Are they all unwholesome?
7. Name some things country youth should know about city life. What should farmers know before moving to town?
8. Describe some of the rural forces which are educating youth toward the towns.
9. Compare the country and city in their tendency to humanize or harden.
10. Give the story of why Henry Grady left New York.
11. Show how the home has its best opportunity in the country. What is city life doing for the home?
12. Describe recent forces which are working to make country life more attractive. Name some of the agencies which are helping the farmer.
13. Name definite provisions by the National Government for agricultural improvement. Explain the Smith-Lever Act.
14. Tell of the effects farm machinery has had. Tell how farmers have gradually learned that capable brain work and initiative win their reward on the farm. What does Dr. A. M. Soule say of Southern farm possibilities?
15. Name some things which are driving out rural isolation. Give the number of rural telephones in the South. Tell of the wonderful spread of the use of automobile, and of road improvement.
16. Describe the benefits of rural mail delivery and give the amount of the service in the South.
17. Tell of the enlarging appreciation of farm life. Is it practicable to have city conveniences in a rural home? Quote the reasons given by two Cornell students for preferring country life.

CHAPTER III.

FOR COUNTY LIFE IMPROVEMENT.

1. Forces which influence rural welfare. Though the country church is the chief institution on which we must depend to serve and inspire rural life, there are many other forces which powerfuly affect it. They also react on the church itself and condition its power to supply the inspiration and leadership needed. These forces vary from the cost of transportation of products, middlemen's profits, farm loans, soil depletion, farm practice, and land tenure, to the school, the farmers' organization, and the personal and intimate interests of the farm home. Many of these themes are highly technical and involved. They deserve the careful study of statesmen and leaders and especially of the farmers themselves. We must here content ourselves with a brief survey of some needed country life improvements, and a glimpse of one outstanding danger which threatens not only country life but Southern civilization.

2. Favorable omens. In the last chapter, attention was given to some natural advantages in country life, and some improvements which have come through new inventions, better postal facilities, and road improvement. These tend to lessen hard labor and isolation, and to increase rural intelligence. They are prophecies of new and higher standards of living among farm people. There are other favorable omens. There is an alert farm press, which has increased several hundred per cent in circulation in recent years; a greatly increased popularity of the agricultural

colleges, and their re-adjustment of emphasis so as to include country life and not technical agriculture alone; farmers' institutes and the extension sources of farm colleges; a growing book literature on country life and farming; the bulletins issued by the National Department of Agriculture; the enlarging number of urbanites who have concluded that the simple life of the open country is better; and a certain pause in the exodus from the country to the town, which has been noticed within the last few years. Cities do not and cannot replenish themselves, and if the South should have a future as long as China's past, it would at the end have a large rural population. Our great concern is that the people who live in the open country shall fairly represent that which is best in American ideals and living, rather than sink to the low plane of rural life in monarchial and non-Christian countries; and there are many cheering omens.

3. The one alarming fact. The one alarming fact in Southern rural life is the steady increase of farm tenancy. The figures which set forth the facts will be found instructive, and the student is recommended to digest them. Of the 6,294,000 farms in the United States, as given by the thirteenth census, 3,285,000 are in the South (including the Southwest). In the non-South regions seventy-five percent of the farms are operated by owners and twenty-five percent by tenants; in the South fifty-two percent are operated by owners and forty-eight percent by tenants. From 1900 to 1910, while farm tenantry in non-South sections increased 2.4 percent, it increased 23.4 percent in the South. In the South the increase of farm owners (white and black) in the non-cotton States 13.8 percent. The increase of tenants in the non-cotton States was nine per-

cent, and in the cotton States thirty percent. Startling as these facts are, to many it will be more so to be told that there are in the ten cotton States actually a slightly larger number of white than of Negro tenants. The census figures show a total of 641,763 white and 624,230 Negro tenants in these States. (See Appendix B).

4. Evils of the tenant system. The tenant system is not in itself necessarily evil. Many tenants become owners. But for the tenant system to become the dominant plan of farm operation in the South does not mean less than the serious crippling, or the actual destruction, of the treasured social, religious, and personal resources of the country, which in the past have given the life of this section most of its beauty and power and high patriotism and idealism. The development of a large white tenant class in the South is in the direction of a peasantry, which, in some respects, would be more demoralizing than Negro slavery was, and would disgrace and tend to destroy our American democracy. Professor Thomas N. Carver, of Harvard, is quoted as saying: "Next to war, pestilence, and famine, the worst thing that can happen to a rural community is absentee landlordism." The tenant system vies with all-cotton farming for supremacy as a quick method of soil robbery! It is said that half the tenants move yearly. Their only interest in the soil is to get out of it all that they can get quickly, and the only crops they wish to plant are those immediately convertible into cash. The landlords deplore these evils, but add to them by not seeking to attract long-term tenants, and often by blindly insisting on the all-cotton planting. Even in a treatise which makes no claim to technical knowledge, it must be noted that the continued planting of cotton on the same fields robs the soil of humus, and impoverishes it

through erosion, as few other crops do. The tenant does not want to plant anything which he cannot get off the soil and sell before winter. The greedy supply merchant will not let him plant anything else, if he can help it. The absentee landlord is usually of the same mind, and so the mad round of soil depletion proceeds. The all-cotton slave has to buy all the food and supplies to support his family, while he spends the seasons of another year in the treadmill of unenlightened cotton production, often only to find himself in the fall owing more than his cotton is worth. There, alas! is the crux of the pathetic folly of much of the farm practice of the South, which is tying the sons of our sturdy American freemen down to a hopeless agricultural grind. This rural condition is sad enough to behold in England and Europe; in America we cannot have it as the characteristic method of farming, unless we are willing to sacrifice our democratic institutions as the price of developing a civilization which despises the soil and the open country.

5. Rifts in the cloud. Southern statesmanship and the Southern genius for creating and organizing social institutions have made a proud and great record. Can they find a way to relieve the farming of the South from the alarming and sustained drift toward the tenancy of the mass of white farmers? If they cannot, the glory of the South will practically all belong to the past, for the accepted paths of honor of a people whose genius and sacrifices have been for democracy will no longer be open when once they have gotten their consent that the country people of the South shall be practically a peasant class. We rejoice that there are tokens of a better situation coming. Slow beyond all other classes of men to learn and adopt new things, thousands of farmers in the South

are to-day adopting improved farm methods. Helpless as the average farmer has been in the cotton States in the all-cotton routine, the many voices which are now beseeching him to change, along with the boll weevil, are bringing him to realize that it is possible to do something besides plant and pick cotton—and increase the percentage of exhausted lands and farm tenants! From the standpoint of the country church there is some encouragement in the fact that white farm owners in the South increased about ten per cent between 1900 and 1910.

6. Absentee landlords. We must at once note, however, that this increase of owners probably does not mean that more farm owners are living in the country, for there has been a steady exodus of owners to the towns and cities, and this probably at least balances the seeming increase of farm-owning country dwellers. Dr. E. W. Stone, pastor at Newnan, Georgia, a typical little Southern city of 8,000, declares that there are thirty retired farmers in the membership of his church, and a total of several times that number in the town. These have come to the town to get away from the hardships of country life. They have usually prospered and now wish to spend the evening years of life in the comparative ease of a town home. Their lands are being worked by tenants. The country church and its friends must find what encouragement they can in the fact that, with the exception of some of the older communities, the exodus of owners to towns, where they practice absentee landlordism, has probably not more than balanced the coming in of new farm owners. There is substantial encouragement in the recent establishment by the National Government of farm loan banks, which will give farmers better banking advantages than they have had, and should make

easier the path to farm ownership among tenants and others. Negro tenancy is not treated here, because it does not directly touch our subject. It is, however, in a more hopeful way than white tenancy. The Negro comes up to tenancy from slave work and that of the hired laborer; the white perhaps usually comes down to it from ownership. Twenty-one percent of the farm blacks own their own small farms and the number of owners is increasing among them.

7. An economic remedy. There are indications that economic causes will press mightily toward lessening tenancy and some of its evils. The constant decrease of soil fertility through the bad farming of the short-term tenant and the fact now becoming apparent that in the developed communities it is more profitable to the enterprising farmer to rent land than to own it at the prevailing high prices, will tend to develop a stable and capable class of tenants who will rent only on long-term leases. The bad farming of short-term tenants will reduce land values, especially in absentee-landlord sections, until it will be possible for capable tenants to buy the land. When landlords come to realize how inevitably soil depletion follows in the wake of the short-lease tenant, they will in self-protection seek to frame contracts which shall be attractive to long-term tenants, or will sell the land or farm it themselves. We cannot measure the speed or effectiveness with which such influences may work, but they tend toward a more stable rural population, and this will greatly increase the opportunity of the rural church.

8. The interest of the church. The country church should be a positive force in seeking to turn the tide against increasing farm tenancy, and the country preacher should do his best to go to the bottom of the subject, in order that

he may instruct the people and help to stay the perverse tide. It would be helpful if our country preachers could take a course in rural sociology and economics at an agricultural college which is awake to its business, or else in an aroused theological seminary. The country preachers are the leading force which drove out the whiskey traffic from the South. Equally informed and stirred, they could in another channel do a work in its own way equally vital to the South's welfare, by helping to save it from an era of farm tenancy and the consequent profound depression of all social, religious, and political life. The tenant system depresses the standard of the home, for families which "move on" at the end of one or a few years, do not develop strong local attachments. The land exploitation of owners who buy to sell at a bargain, is also ruthlessly violating the sacred associations of the old Southern country home. A generation ago, a typical rural Southern home was rich in the traditions of generations, a place where common joys and sorrows were shared by a little group, who looked into the flickering flame of the fire on the domestic hearth and learned the love of home, and then into the changing face of nature out-of-doors and sought not in vain to learn something there of the goodness and mercy of nature's God. Now farmers sell out and move and buy elsewhere as a speculation, or buy and hold the land for a rise in price and then sell. The country church and its friends have every reason to seek to understand and remedy this exploitation of the land.

9. Better homes. Improved farm practice is making more headway in the South than improved home-making. One of the things that leads country youth from the farm home to the town or city is the belief that they will by the

change have about them more attractions and conveniences, and this same thing influences the rural housewife. Farmers often spend hundreds and even thousands on machinery and land improvements, but do nothing to make the farm home a more comfortable and attractive place. With acres to build on, the farm houses are often narrow at the base, poorly proportioned, and two stories high, and placed near the roadside, instead of back from it. Before the Civil War the South had a stately, simple, and well proportioned architecture of its own, adapted to the climate. Once it recovered from the distressing poverty which followed the conflict, the town imported an unadapted architecture from the North and the country was so busy trying to get ahead in the economic game by devotion to all-cotton that it took no time to study architecture. It would hold more of its splendid boys and girls, if it did.

10. Domestic conveniences. The most comfortably arranged room in the farm home should be the kitchen. The farm woman's scheme of life calls for the preparation of three meals a day in all seasons endlessly till death. Yet the husband often buys improved machines to make some particular farm operation easier for perhaps a month in the year, while he leaves his wife to potter with pans and stoves and pots and dishes in the same way through all the years. There is a tradition that farm women furnish an exceptionally large number of the inmates of insane asylums. If it is true, there is a reason in the endless monotony and routine which they too often endure. Dr. C. C. Brown, of South Carolina, on reading this chapter in manuscript, said: "I saw a woman, in a country home in Darlington County, drop into a seat, holding a little black pot in her hand, and exclaim: 'I have half a mind to break it with

a hatchet. I've cooked rice in this one pot every day for twenty-eight years. It makes me tired and sick to look at it.'" In midwinter, years ago, in a remote corner of Horry County, South Carolina, Dr. Brown, Dr. Harvey Hatcher, and this writer hunted the deer. We were most hospitably entertained in the humble homes of the people. One night we were sitting with a family circle before the open fire. Dr. Hatcher, with that matchless charm and understanding which made him so universally beloved, discoursed for the family group about things out in the big world. The worn housewife, in a plain dress and with her hair pulled back and knotted behind her head, sat quietly in a chair and listened, her eyes glued on the venerable speaker. At last she sighed deeply and said: "It is mighty good to hear you-all tell about all them things out yonder. I ain't never gone nowhere much. Once I did go with John [her husband] down to Conway, but it's been a mighty long time ago." Southern farm housewives complain that the Negro women are less and less to be depended on as cooks. Instead of allowing this to drive the family from the farm, the most approved labor-saving appliances should be installed in the kitchen. By such measures the slavery of the cook stove can be lightened into a much less grievous and soul-consuming burden. A builder informs me that running water can be put in a house for a minimum cost of $200. Other labor-saving and sanitary provisions would not be expensive. A bathtub should not be considered an oddity but a necessity in a country home, but Dr. G. Walter Fiske in "The Challenge of the Country" says that it was found fewer than five percent of the farm homes in Ohio contain bathtubs. There is much talk of institutional work for the country church which is impractica-

ble, but it is certainly fit that the country pastor and church should lead the people to adopt wholesome and aesthetic standards of living. The country home should have in it good magazines and papers. It is sad to think how many inquisitive and hungry young minds are without food in many farm homes, when just a little intelligent attention would serve their needs and brighten their lives.

11. A plea for beauty. More attention should be given to beautifying the garden and grounds about the country home. There is always adequate space and the farmer's tools and teams in a few hours could produce wonders in improved appearance, but too often the home is treated as if it were a camp, while the first-rate thought and energy are all put on the farm crops. Unconsciously the farmer is thus teaching his children that it is not the home which counts, but the cotton and the corn! Small wonder many of them leave for the town just as soon as they are able to get away. Fresh from college, the writer's first experience as a preacher was to serve four of the weakest country churches in South Carolina, one of which was almost under the shadow of King's Mountain. In his pastoral passages, he chanced to drive by a little country home which stood back on an elevation well away from the road, among a lovely grove of oak and hickory trees. It was April and the man had been breaking the ground to plant cotton. The tender leaves of spring bedecked the trees in the promise of rich summer foliage, but the farmer had decided he needed the land in that grove for cotton. He had plowed under the trees and, apparently the day before my passage, had cut around the trunk of each one to deaden it! A kind of indignation came upon me then, and it returns now after twenty-six years. What hope can we have of building a

fine and satisfying rural life, which shall hold our Southern boys and girls and serve the nation and the world, out of aesthetic dullards whose coarseness regards the cotton bloom and plowed furrow a more fit setting for the front yard than a grove of majestic trees! If farmers can be brought to see it, they cannot invest any money on their property which will bring richer returns than that which they expend in making their homes convenient and attractive. Some of them do see it. May their number increase.

12. Social satisfactions. The social life of the Old South, whose beauty and attractiveness has been preserved in literature, was mainly a rural development. It was founded upon the feudal system of Negro slavery and was therefore hard hit by the War. It has fortunately to an extent survived to this day and in the old slave sections returning prosperity has enabled it to maintain something of its former beauty and flavor, while it adjusted itself to the changed conditions. But the social needs of the greatly increased rural population of the South of the present are at once larger and more democratic than were those of the glorified past. Young people crave and need opportunities for a satisfying social contact, and the lack of such opportunities in the countryside has sent many a young woman from the country to the grind of a stenographer's desk in the city and many a boy to a town clerkship, whose lives would count for more in the country. Older people in country places also need suitable social institutions. Country life suffers from isolation and monotony as much if not as injuriously as city life does from congestion and overstimulation. The county in which the youth of the author was spent had in it a social philosopher after the order of "Bill Arp," whose quaint contributions in the rural press of

the South, through its kindly and homely philosophy, for many years cheered and gladdened tens of thousands of lonely hearts in country homes, and whose lack of post-humous reputation in Southern erudite circles does no credit to our literary discernment. At an annual meeting of the Saluda Association, which for a century has been the great rural event of the county, this kindly philosopher remarked that it is always a benefit to people to get them together under circumstances which guarantee good will and moderation, whether or not they receive any tangible religious benefit. In a day when so many are seeking to steal the flavor of religion without its reality, I certainly do not desire to give countenance to an over-emphasis of the social fruits of religion, but those words of Colonel B. F. Crayton, of Anderson, South Carolina, I have treasured through the years, and I set them down here to honor a type of man worthy of honor in the South and to add my own testimony to the truth of Colonel Crayton's observation. Since there is little danger that our rural churches shall ever suffer from the vanities of social life in the restricted sense, we may without stint encourage them to magnify their function in providing a wholesome outlet to the social cravings of the people. Country worshippers should be encouraged to keep up the informal social contact of the church grounds and of the groups of men and maidens who gather under the trees about the spring. Country churches may accomplish a social as well as a directly religious end in the encouragement of suitable auxiliary societies, and the social end be made to serve a religious purpose. Country women need the mission or ladies' aid society of the church for religious instruction and service, but they need it also because it brings helpful and satisfying social contact with

their neighbors. In this same spirit the country church should encourage the provision of suitable games and social satisfactions for its young people. Until it does, there will always be an element of pathos in its disciplining its young members for participation in the only, though questionable, social amusements which the community provides.

13. Better farming. It is a matter of common knowledge that farm practice is improving in almost every section. Still it is proper that a definite plea should be entered here that the friends of country life and the rural church should do all within their power to encourage better farming. Though the hardpan of the farmer's conservatism is at last crumbling wherever the educational forces have been strong and persistent enough to penetrate through the top-soil of long habit, a great deal still needs to be done before the transformation will be general and complete. Assuredly the Christian bodies in the South are under even more obligation to give vogue and moral sanction to the efforts of the farm schools to rout the clog of outworn farm practice than the schools are to seek to further the efficiency of the farmer's church. Harm has been done by some impatient extremists who have insisted that the country preacher should become a kind of farm demonstrator. But, while it is unfortunate that the theories of such persons should have had so much prominence in rural church conferences and books, it is still true that the country pastor is not really meeting the needs who has not an intelligent comprehension of and interest in the problems of soil fertility, animal husbandry, and the growth of crops.

14. Rural organization. President Woodrow Wilson at the Church and Country Life Conference, in Columbus, Ohio,

warned his hearers against trusting in organization without the spirit of co-operation, and declared that such organization is dead and may become dangerous. Appropriate as this warning doubtless is to many in this day of organization, it does not apply with great force to rural life, which suffers from too little rather than too much organization. Mr. George W. Russell, in "The Irish Homestead," says: "The difficulty of moving the countryman, which has become traditional, is not due to the fact that he lives in the country, but to the fact that he lives in an unorganized society." In thousands of rural communities in the South the church is the only organized expression of the community life, except the school, the maintenance of which through the public school funds is almost automatic and does not necessarily depend upon, though it needs, purposeful cooperative action on the part of the community. The church life itself is usually gauged to allow the minimum of co-operative, organized effort. One minor reason for the facility with which Baptists win their way in a rural environment is that our democratic system is capable of being adjusted in the local church to the requirements of a great deal of individualism. Baptists have no cause to regret this adaptability of their principles, but the large amount of personal independence our local church autonomy makes possible is also a large amount of independence to be so educated in service and co-operation that it will be indeed a liberty which is of Christ, instead of degenerating into mere headiness and license. Because Baptists believe in democracy and practice it in their churches, we are under a peculiar need of encouraging through our rural churches such organizations of farm people as will tend to modify isolation, chasten insulated individualism,

and quicken community spirit through the stimulus of common purposes and action.

15. The rural school. The rural school is an institution whose welfare is of first-rate importance in any scheme for a better country life. This is a great subject in itself, on which much expert attention is at last being turned. There is no purpose here to set forth even the outstanding suggestions for rural school improvement. The community school, made up of several small schools, has probably been over-advertised as a panacea, though some sections will profit by the change. Better school houses, better pay for teachers, and better teachers are prime requisites. The country churches may get some able preachers without half paying them; they have done so. But the country school will not get many teachers who are big enough to do the work well, so long as these teachers are paid in driblets. If the salary is only enough to attract a young lady until such time as she marries and makes a home, the young lady without experience will continue to be the chief dependence. Some rural communities are putting up better school buildings. The others should follow, for almost nowhere have the buildings been adequate. But the thing most needful is a teacher who understands and believes in his job, and proposes to stay by it. Such teachers may be had when country people are willing to pay them, and not sooner. Country teachers who can teach and will stay, and country preachers who can preach and will stay, would within less than a generation bring the rural life of the South forward one hundred percent. The prime thing country people must do to get and keep such preachers and teachers is to demonstrate their willingness to pay them a living support for their work.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER III.

1. Name some of the country life forces which react intimately on the rural church. How will it advantage country pastors and farmers to understand these?
2. Name some favorable country life omens. Why should city people be interested in these?
3. Name the most alarming fact in current rural life. Give the figures for farm ownership and tenancy in the South and in the rest of the country. Give the increase of farm tenancy in the cotton States from 1900 to 1910. Give the number of white and black tenants.
4. Is the tenant system essentially bad? Why would it be ruinous as the dominant farm policy? Quote Professor Carver of Harvard on absentee landlordism. Show in detail how the tenant, owner, and supply merchant conspire to perpetuate the all-cotton practice.
5. What would tenant farming do for the South, if it was dominant? Name some forces that are working to limit tenancy.
6. Tell of the increase of absentee landlords. Why do they move from the farm to town? Give the facts as developed at Newnan, Georgia. Tell of the establishment of farm loan banks. What of Negro tenancy?
7. What self-curative elements are there in the short-lease system? What will tend to drive landlords to offer attractive long leases? Show how these forces are friendly to better farming both in tenancy and an increase of owners.
8. What should country churches and preachers do to help the situation? Show how tenantry depresses rural home life.
9. What is said of the need of better rural homes? Tell of the effect of the war on architecture in the South.
10. What is said of the kitchen in the farm home? Show how it is neglected for farm machinery. Quote Dr. Brown's illustration, showing a woman's almost-despair. Tell of the lonely farm-woman to whom Dr. Hatcher talked.

Why should the rural church and pastor be interested in better homes?

11. Tell how many farmers might easily beautify the home surroundings. Show the connection between rural home neglect and the exodus to the city. Give the illustration of the farmer who deadened the beautiful trees in his front yard that he might plant cotton.
12. Show how an adjustment of the social life of the Old South may be made attractive to young people now in the country. Give the illustration adduced of Saluda Association, and Col. Crayton's comment on it. Why should social converse on the church grounds be encouraged? Show why the church should be interested in wholesome social satisfactions for the people.
13. State reasons why the country church and preacher should take an interest in better farming.
14. Show why our churches should be interested in behalf of the organizations of farmers.
15. Tell of the significance of the rural school in community welfare. Name the prime essentials to country school betterment.

There is no salvation of society, but salvation of individuals. When the individuals that compose society are saved, then society is saved, not till then. * * * It may surprise, may even startle for me to say, as I do say, that no **progress** toward the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth has been made by the achievements, however great, and however worthy to be welcomed and applauded, of social, political, industrial, economic reform—unless there has accompanied such reform a movement resulting in the conversion of individual souls from a state, invariably their natural state, of disobedience, to a state of obedience toward God. * * * The only true progress toward the extension and establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth is effected by increasing the number of real Christians. Jesus Christ saves human society in the one sole way in which human society can be saved—that is, by saving the component individuals in it. Ameliorations of outward conditions are good, advances in civilization are good, but they are not salvation, and they are not any part in salvation. Of this, the present state of the most advanced nations in the world, may be considered conclusive colossal tragical proof.—William C. Winkinson, in Concerning Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

CHAPTER IV.

A SPIRITUAL PROGRAM.

1. The word choked by cares. There are indications of a current decline in vital religion in many country churches. Holding on to an outworn program, which was the best that our great-grandfathers could maintain, while in sparsely settled communities they battled with the wilderness, these churches, after the wealth and population and life-pace have gone forward amazingly, are doing so little for the Lord that spiritual barrenness is insensibly creeping upon them. Their case is set forth in the Parable of the Sower in the seeds sown among thorns, which represent those who hear the word, but become unfruitful through the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches. John prayed for Gaius that he might prosper and be in health even as his soul prospered. But tens of thousands of members of churches which still hold on to an outworn pioneer program, are prospering in their worldly goods a hundred times more than they have prospered in their souls. They have sought to support the institutions of religion with dimes, while they spent hundreds and thousands on themselves, and leanness of soul has come upon them.

2. We have all sinned. There is here no purpose or desire to pronounce an ungenerous judgment on country churches. There are not a few to which these words do not apply. They are joyously building up the cause of Christ in an effort to keep pace spiritually with their material advance. They are building better churches, and paying the pastor

a living support, which will usually allow him to serve them for at least half his time. In many of the other churches, which are holding on to a program that provides the least possible for the church short of closing up and quitting, the ultra-conservatism of rural habit is partly responsible. They have not been conscious that they were sinning against God in their niggardly support of the church and their resistance to progress. If they have sinned, we not only all suffer with them, we also share the responsibility for their sin. In our Conventions and Associations, in the religious press and the pulpits, we have had numberless opportunities to admonish these churches that they should adjust the scope of their efforts to the needs of our day, but we have not in any determined and sustained way done so. The denomination has been abundantly able to adopt a large and effective program in the interest of leading these churches into an adequate program, for they are ready to receive its approach in the spirit of Christ, but we have only just begun such effort in the Enlistment work, and the timid, not to say entirely inadequate, provision so far made for the service, does not indicate that the denomination yet understands the obligation or the immense need and opportunity.

3. Churches that want to do better. Silence on the part of country churches concerning these matters does not necessarily mean that they are indifferent. They have not learned to be forward to express their thoughts and desires in an organized way, in this respect being like the rural community. A prosperous South Carolina farmer to whom the writer spoke in his home, showing him how a resident pastor and twice-a-month preaching could be substituted for their traditional once-a-month service by a

preacher who lived in a town twenty miles off, said: "Why, if we can get that, not only will I pay five times as much as I do now, but I can get my neighbors to do the same thing. We want a community life which will satisfy our children, so they will not follow the procession off to town." Many churches have simply lost the power of initiative by the long habit of inertia. Once-a-month preaching has come to be regarded by them almost as fixed as the seasons of the year. There are thousands of churches in a similar case to that of Joyce Branch Church in the Barnwell Association, of which I have spoken. If our Baptist democracy affords no service adapted to helping them to break away from the terrible bonds of outworn custom for plans suited to the present needs, it is a serious reflection upon our democracy.

4. Indifferent churches. There are other thousands of country churches in which there are indications that they have sunk into an almost paralytic apathy and indifference. This is particularly true in those sections where the pressure of the changed conditions in rural life has been longest felt. Missouri has probably suffered more than any other Southern State from the rural exodus to the cities and to bargain-counter land opportunities westward. Its rural population decreased between 1900 and 1910. Dr. Charles King, of Louisiana, Missouri, in a pamphlet, "The Rural Church Prolbem," says that in twenty-four Baptist Associations in the State, of which he made a survey, 138 out of 293 churches were losing membership and eighty-nine were practically dead. These figures are exceptionally bad for the South, though similar reports come from many Northern and Middle West sections. Dr. King says of these sick and dying churches that from them

comes no cry of distress; they seem to have no concern for the future, but to be entirely satisfied in their chronic inertia. He declares that they do not want a resident pastor, nor do they care for preaching more than once a month. Happily these startling conditions probably cannot be found so massed in any other section of the South, for the country life metamorphosis which industrialism and city-pull have brought about, are less advanced here. But we may well take warning from his report. Conditions which are true in Missouri today may be equally true in Georgia or North Carolina or Texas within two decades, if we continue to ignore the situation of our country churches. Already it is an easy matter to find some churches in almost any District Association which are apathetic and complacent over their confirmed spiritual torpor.

5, A spiritual task. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the program for adjusting the usages and methods of our country churches to the present needs of rural communities must be essentially a spiritual program. Plans and efforts there must be, for we tabernacle in the flesh and cannot do without plans. But the most scientific and strategic plans will fail, if they are not the working out of a strong and determined spiritual purpose to honor God by a re-dedication of ourselves to him for service. Thousands of country churches are spiritually sick from too little teaching and spiritual exercise, coupled with a business and social preoccupation which is ten times as exacting as that of the pioneers who invented the once-a-month system as a frontier makeshift. Treating them for this mal-adjusted emphasis is essentially a spiritual function. The denomination can only help to the extent that it approaches the matter in this way. As a people, Baptists

have been brought into the Kingdom mainly by the revival meeting and country preachers. May these revivals never lose their power. But there is urgently needed another kind of revival, that shall esteem it as truly the work of God to feed the sheep as it is to bring in the lambs. The once-a-month system leaves too many unnourished spiritual babes who are mature in years, and loses too many of the lambs of Christ out among the brambles and thorns of life. A genuine spiritual revival among Southern Baptists would not dare and would not desire to close its eyes to the responsibility upon us to make some real and worthy provision for nurturing all the flock of God.

6. Incompetent proposals. Many writers on the country church have a penchant for large emphasis on social service and institutional programs as means whereby the life of the country church may be rejuvenated and intensified. Some of them use a large proportion of the space in their books in outlining such programs. Hearty recognition is here given to the aid which may be had from a larger comprehension of the requirements of social service and institutional effort. The times in which we live make it imperative that the religion of the individual shall adjust its spirit and action to a conscious effort for the general social weal. But it is essential that these new ideas be instilled by teachers who themselves are pre-eminently men of reverence and faith, and who have a Christly patience and a loving consideration of the limitations of the people who are to be taught. Some heralds of country church salvation have devoted themselves to offering a ready-made program from without, composed of such ingredients as social service, institutional effort, and the union church, rather than emphasizing the primacy of the spiritual in

equipping the churches for adequate community service. Occasionally such writers fall into a vein of scarcely veiled sarcasm about the emptiness of the orthodoxy of these backward churches, and show that they are impatient with it and think it should give place to their new ideas.

7. Social service. Except the bold and still insistent demand in certain prominent quarters that the Christian bodies shall promptly surrender their life and identify in the interest of an organic church union and of alleged increased efficiency, the most remarkable assault which has been made on constituted Christianity in our times by those who pass for its friends, is that social service shall take the place of personal faith and righteousness as the chief emphasis in Christian preaching. Of course there was that in current life which afforded an occasion for the hysteria. There always is. The rapid growth of social problems and the abrupt awakening of the social conscience had not been responded to promptly enough by the churches in an enlarging comprehension of their responsibility to preach the social implications of the gospel. The extremest of the social gospel enthusiasts in effect demanded that we should shut up the factory which produces the goods that we might give all our attention to their consumption. It was as if the old question of faith and works, on which Paul and Peter seemed to be but were not at variance, must be fought out in a twentieth century incarnation. Possibly the tremendous wave with which the extreme social gospel views sought to overwhelm the public through millions of printed pages and tens of thousands of public addresses, has done its worst. At least the people of God are learning how to discount utopian dreams which promise a millennium without the cross of Christ. Pro-

fessor Adolf Harnack, the German scholar, is certainly not prejudiced in favor of orthodox views, but Professor Harnack, in his book the "Social Gospel," is quoted as writing: "The gospel is glad tidings of benefits that pass not away. Its end is redemption and not social improvement." Dr. Francis C. Peabody, in a recent address before the Religious Education Association, said: "Religious education leads to a better knowledge of God; social duty leads to a better service of man. The two stand near together, but are faced in opposite ways. Where, it may be asked, is the place for personal piety among the pressing demands for social service? Are the economists, sociologists, philanthropists, or revolutionists to represent all that is left of the Christian faith? Is the Christian church to teach an industrial revolution instead of a spiritual evolution?" Josh Billings in quaint phrase said an honest horse race awaits the advent of an honest human race. The pendulum of opinion is swinging back to where the people of God, at least, see that better social conditions have no dependable source except from men and women made dynamic by knowing God.

8. Unbalanced emphasis. To some the Christian bodies may appear slow in adjusting their teachings to the added requirements of our industrial age. Responsible leaders must safeguard while they lead, and therefore they make slower and less spectacular progress than idealists who dream of halcyon days, but do not lay the weight of a finger on practical effort to help bring them. It is small wonder if the institutions of constituted Christianity have found it difficult with a speed equal to present-day social and economic changes to comprehend the needs and readjust their methods and emphasis so as to care for the

problems as rapidly as they have been precipitated. Among those who have urged upon the churches the necessity of a larger social service, are some who appreciate the fruits of Christian faith without understanding the secret of its power. They demand a gospel of social service, but fight shy of the mystical elements of religious faith, or even discredit the body of Christian doctrines as out-of-date and impotent. Therefore, while the Christian bodies were examining the new demands, to see whether they be of Christ, they had also both to bear accusations of indifference from these impatient idealists and to warn men of the folly of seeking social results without at the same time realizing the necessity of that personal faith in Christ from which alone comes a dynamic adequate to produce such results.

9. Institutional effort. Another movement, which has in it useful possibilities for the country church, but has suffered from the disproportioned emphasis given it by the inevitable agitators who make a hobby horse of every new idea, is that for institutional effort. To overcome the isolation of country life and to help re-establish its prestige in community leadership, the rural church and pastor are told that they must organize clubs or reading rooms or baseball teams or a community house or a debating society or a lecture course or a corn club. The advocates of such measures do not always agree among themselves as to just how far the church should go in adding to its unique function of spiritual instruction that of leadership in welfare effort. Some of them seem to ignore entirely the purely spiritual offices of the church. In one breath they magnify institutional effort and speak slightingly of the preaching services the churches have had, as being without moral

force or significance. These impatient theorists, who show such scant respect for the religious bodies and what they have accomplished, themselves use methods which are both un-Christian and unscientific. It is neither scientific nor Christian to insult those spiritual bodies which have done just about all of that which has been done to make life sweet and pure, or to demand that the particular faith which has given the motive for all they have done, shall for the proposed new accomplishments give place to a gospel of good works, which is to be the more firmly established by caricaturing such efforts as have been made to preach salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Some of the recent friends of institutional effort have gone so far as this, and have made it harder for the Christian bodies to foster such community service by the churches as is really needed, without seeming to endorse the folly of these writers.

10. Spring Hill Church. Some of the activities which are proposed for community welfare are worthy to be encouraged. There are favored communities throughout the South in which such service was rendered by the country church long before we had learned to call it institutional effort. In 1912, this writer was present at the centennial celebration of Spring Hill Church, in a large country community, in Scotland County, North Carolina. This church enjoys the distinction of having probably sent out more men and women to serve the general welfare than any other in North Carolina, a State which is justly becoming famed for the high service rendered by its citizens. Distinguished lawyers, a solicitor, a poet, editors, teachers, mission secretaries, and ministers of the gospel, have been and are still among its gifts to society. Among these are Dr. Livingston

Johnson and Editor Archibald Johnson, two men now known among Baptists throughout the South for valued and distinguished service. Distinctly a country community, I found that Spring Hill had among its young people more college students than many towns of 5,000 in the State, and a large proportion of these were coming back home to live. In the search for causes, I first came upon the fact that for many years the church has been open for preaching every Sunday and that they support a pastor and furnish him a home in the heart of the community. Next, I found that in the little octagonal brick building out on the expansive church grounds, a generation ago, the good women had organized a temperance and debating society for the young people. This society prospered for years. Not only did it serve wholesomely a social need of the young people; it also developed the forensic powers of the young fellows and fitted them with a desire to go further. They have gone further in a way hardly surpassed by a community in the land. What Spring Hill Church has done, or some similarly adapted effort, can be inaugurated in thousands of communities. In fact some such work must be done; for, if material life goes forward and the rural and religious life stands still, the moral and religious life will cease to stand still and will go backward, and in time the material life, uninspired and self-centered, will go to pieces. This gloomy nexus of events may be set forth without apology. History abundantly verifies it.

11. The church union idea. The church union idea in many sections has recently been set forth as a cure for the ills of the country church. It is the conviction of the writer that the union church will not solve the country church problem in the South or elsewhere. Expediency and ef-

ficiency, on the one hand, and the spiritual benefits which will follow the union of all God's people, on the other, are the standard arguments advanced in favor of the union church in the rural community. Union church advocates assume but do not prove that denominational churches divide communities into hostile, non-co-operative segments, that denominational groups have nothing but outworn prejudices on which to draw for their justification, and that a union church would overcome the real or alleged disadvantages of the denominational system. If it can be shown that real unity of spirit between God's people would not be advanced by a union church, and that the efficiency and expediency propaganda, of which we now have so much, is rather a child of worldly wisdom than of the wisdom which is of God, it will follow that the union church idea is a dangerous enemy of that spiritual progress for which this chapter is a plea.

12. The New Testament on unity. The unity of the people of God must be a matter of deep concern for all sincere Christians. We do well to seek after it. But Christian unity and church union are not the same thing. It is possible to have unity of spirit between sheep in different flocks and also to have confusion and suspicion between those who are in a single ecclesiastical fold. In fact history gives ample instances of both. All the people of God are to be one with that oneness which Christ has with the Father, (John 17:21) which is spiritual and incorporeal, not organic and material. This unity they have now to the extent that they are really Christ's disciples. It inheres in the very nature of the Christ-life which has been born in them. The passage (John 10:16) which has been quoted to prove that all the sheep must be in one fold,

in the Greek says "there shall be one flock." This is also the reading in the Revised Version. Among the people of God, as in the shepherd-practice of Palestine in the time of our Lord, one flock may be separated into many folds. The warning which Paul gives the Corinthians against schism (I Cor. 12:25) manifestly applies to the local church and not to distinct bodies. In fact Paul's instructions to the church at Rome (Rom. 16:17) were such as would rather tend to create divisions for sufficient cause than to cultivate pride in an outward show of catholicity.

13. Unity greatly to be desired. The unity of the New Testament is greatly to be desired, and it is coming to-day just in proportion as Christ reigns in the hearts of his people. It ought not to come faster, or in any other way. We may without hesitation declare that this unity of spirit is of almost infinitely more consequence than an organic union in "one fold." As to whether the organic union of all Christian bodies would be desirable under any conditions, the failure of Roman Catholicism when it has dominated whole countries, and the notorious tendency of a single dominant ecclesiastical body to form an unholy alliance with the State, may well make us doubt. However much religious statesmen may covet the power of the State to back up their efforts to do good, the Kingdom of Christ does not come in that way. Certainly the organic union of Christian bodies is never to be desired at the cost of the violation of the consciences of any of those who enter into the combination. For, insignificant as this plea for conscience may look to a grasping ambition, which seeks world-domination, it is that sacred thing which is precious beyond kingdoms to our Lord and Saviour. Earnestly to seek after unity of spirit among Christians promises more for the

Kingdom of God than to work for a mechanical ecclesiastical union. Certainly in the South the spirit of the great Christian bodies is already cooperative rather than competitive, and they regard each other with far more confidence and good will than any one of them does the proposition to bring church union by reducing the contents of Christian faith to the least common denominator. When the advocates of organic church union learn to have more patience with and appreciation of the worth of the various Christian bodies in their conscientious adherence to denominational principles, which are intimately associated with and grow out of their reverence for the revealed will of God, they will more than some of them now do commend themselves to the devout Christian public as examples of that comprehensive and reverential faith which they declare may be had in organic church union.

14. Union church does not work. In those sections where the union church has been most tried it has developed an almost epidemic mortality. Mr. Joseph E. McAfee, of New York, Secretary of the Northern Presbyterian Home Mission Board, writes as follows: "As a matter of experience and demonstration, the union church does not work. There are several explanations, but the fact is stubborn and final; union churches fail, while several churches in a community where formerly one existed, do succeed." Yet Mr. McAfee has since announced his conversion to the union idea. Dr. G. Frederick Wells, a prominent official of Northern Methodists and sometime official of the Federal Council, is an advocate of church union. Therefore testimony from Dr. Wells to its failure in actual trial is of peculiar interest. Of an effort to federate one Methodist and two Congregational churches in

a New England hamlet, he writes: "The Methodists forgot that they were Methodists. They forgot the larger democracy of connectionalism and considered their own leaders as 'bishops.' Of course trouble resulted. Denominational disloyalty always brings trouble and inefficiency. Federation in this instance has been a compromise and has meant disloyalty, administrative trouble, the humiliation of both Congregational and Methodist pastors, and much local ill-feeling." He tells of another effort to federate a Methodist and a Baptist church: "To the Methodists it seemed a case of 'federate or die.' Within three years it seemed to them to mean 'federate **and** die.' It developed that the articles of federation had not only compromised but absolutely displaced and slaughtered Methodist connectional principles and government." No opponent of organic union could well bring against it a more severe arraignment in so few words. Two men or churches can walk together only so far as they are agreed. Dr. Wells, of the Northern Methodists, a prominent friend of union, thus joins hands with Mr. McAfee, a leading Presbyterian official, in declaring that in practice the union church has proven a failure.

15. The reason it fails. The central reason of all such failures is that practically the union church does and must ask the best men and women in its various component groups to violate their consciences. Those who have no denominational conscience would be the logical persons as leaders around whom to build up the union church, but these are exactly the persons who usually show the least spiritual qualification for leadership—which ought to open the eyes of the unionists to the weakness of the plausible sophistries in which they deal. A writer in "Rural Life,"

speaking of conditions he has observed at the North, shows the inherent weakness of the union church, as follows: "The assertion has been continually drummed into the minds of the people that denominational doctrines are nothing. They have been given to understand that their forefathers were very foolish folk and ought to have known better, who suffered persecution, banishment, and in many instances martyrdom because of their denominational loyalty; that the man willing to lay aside all his personal beliefs for the union church is really the true Christian. The people in the open country, once the most loyal to their own denomination, have at last taken the preachers in their own word, and even gone a step farther in reasoning that if their forefathers were wrong, who went to such expense to erect meeting houses where they could worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences, it matters little whether they attend any church." To our mind this utterance and that of Dr. Wells are sufficient to explain why many country churches are dying at the North. Dr. Wells declares that the Methodist connectional polity is a principle with them. As a principle held by a great body of disciples of the Master, all other real Christians must respect it, instead of spitefully abusing the Methodists for "narrow sectarianism." If the Baptists who entered into the federal compact with those Methodists, were worthy of the name, they held to immersion, a regenerate church membership, a large democracy, and other peculiar beliefs as principles. The basal reason why trouble must come in such unions is that principle and conscience are violated, and it is the better though abused instincts in the wrongly-yoked groups which lead each group to undertake to put its principles over on the other. It de-

serves to be said for such local groups that their common sense might be depended on to protect them from the folly of such efforts, did they not live under the lash and urge of powers and dominions higher up. Any union which must be accomplished at the sacrifice of principle, will be devoid of spiritual force in proportion to its size. James Russell Lowell in his essay on "Democracy" says: "Compromise makes a good umbrella but a poor roof. It is a temporary expedient, often wise in party politics, almost sure to be unwise in statesmanship." The religious life of the rural South needs a roof, not an umbrella. It needs strength not merely to shed the peltings of showers of popular worldly demands, but to inspire a great civilization with moral and spiritual purpose.

16. Not over-churched. Many rural church experts take it for granted that the country communities are over-churched. Enquiry from religious workers throughout the South has elicited proof that this is very seldom the case. A survey conducted by the Federal Council itself in Colorado showed that for every over-churched community there were four or five neglected communities. Dr. Charles King, of Missouri, a keen student of country church needs, declares that there are few over-churched communities in that State, though the exceptional conditions in parts of Missouri would make it more likely to have over-churched communities than any other State in the South. Replying to the implications which the experts in rural sociology extract from the alleged over-churched condition of the country, Dr. King writes: "Even if some communities are over-churched, federation or consolidation would not necessarily bring relief, for many rural churches which have no competition are also in sore distress." He adds that the

operation of the law of the "survival of the fittest" may be depended upon to take care of such situations. As a matter of fact, it has done so in the past, and is doing so now in every social institution besides the churches. It is rather odd that in the religious field alone, and in a day when the religious bodies show more co-operative spirit than ever before, a group of religious experts should have developed concerning the churches an almost violent crusade for combination. Dr. Wilbert L. Anderson, of New Hampshire, recently deceased, was probably the ablest American writer on country life problems. On page 276 of his book, "The Country Town," concerning the proposition to kill churches in the name of efficiency, he writes: "The presumption is that a church has a duty to live; the elimination of useless churches must be left to inexorable change, and the Christian conscience shrinks from church-killing with forethought. As a whole the home missionary churches amply vindicate their usefulness; no churches can show larger returns for the investment; a dollar, a Christian worker, a church member, means more for the Kingdom in these churches than in any others."

17. The efficiency fetich. Big business, the most prominent child of our industrial civilization, has for purposes of money-making developed a doctrine of "efficiency" which is affecting religious bodies in many quarters, but which is not the efficiency of Christ. The ruthless colossus of European militarism has done the same thing, as an excuse for an insatiable greed of conquest. This efficiency preachment is much used in the interest of the union church. Small towns with several weak churches are produced and it is contended that the three or four weak churches should be united to make on strong church. On the practical side

it may be remarked that hardly more than three percent of the population in the South lives in towns of from 500 to 1,500 population. Accepting for the moment the argument of worldly efficiency as final, it would certainly be very inefficient to adopt a system for three percent of the population which would throw into confusion ninety-seven percent of the religious population not so circumstanced. But, as Dr. Wells shows above, the system does not work even for the three percent. Of this Secretary McAfee says in the article quoted above: "When one church alone occupies a field it more often than not lies down on its job. The worn-out minister is assigned to such fields or the single-church community is neglected entirely, the inadequate supply of ministers telling first of all upon them."

18. The efficiency of Christ. But the efficiency of Christ is not that of worldly wisdom. He commended Mary, the dreamer, rather than her practical and energetic sister. He commended and defended the woman who with the sweet luxuriousness of love anointed him with costly ointment, while the "efficient" Judas complained at what he considered the inexcusable wastefulness of the act. Of the poor widow's gift of two mites, he declared that she had given more than all they who out of their riches gave much. Out of the spirit and sacrifice which she showed, Jesus has built and will build the mighty things of his Kingdom, after the ephemeral vanity of bringing the Kingdom by might and power and worldly wisdom and demonstration shall be forgotten, because true disciples will be ashamed to remember such folly. Her example is doing more today to elicit the liberality of God's people than all the efficiency pronouncements and programs which have been gotten up or will ever be gotten up. When

Peter asked the Saviour what John would do, after he should ascend, the reply was: "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." The love of Peter and John did not suffer in each seeking to follow the Master rather than to know what the other should do. The efficiency of Baptists and of all other Christian bodies is in obedience to Christ. Looking ever to him and obeying him, these bodies will please him better, advance his Kingdom more, and have more real fellowship with and joy in each other, than can possibly be attained by seeking to see if there be any way under heaven by which they may at least for a time be free from the lash of censorious worldly wisdom and opinion. Not by might nor power nor worldly wisdom, but by the spirit of God, will the rural churches of the South save themselves and the country communities from the sad static torpidity and inefficiency which threatens not only the churches, but that great mass of rural citizenship which has been and, by the blessing of God, must continue to be, the mainstay of Southern civilization. The country church and preacher must furnish the community with religious ideals, religious motives, religious inspiration, religious power. Failing in this as a dynamic, no amount of real or imagined scientific alertness and efficiency will be less than a barren failure. Better even the torpidity of outworn pioneer usage than the conceit of alertness in dancing about a golden calf of worldly-wise efficiency.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IV.

1. Show how the underlying problem of the country church is spiritual.
2. Tell of country churches which are growing to meet the

demands. Describe the retarded condition of the large majority of the churches.

3. Tell of the desire of many tardy churches to do better. Quote the statement of a South Carolina farmer about his desire to help his church.
4. Give facts showing inertness of thousands of churches. What facts does Dr. Charles Ring of Missouri give? Show that conditions are generally better than that in the South.
5. Show the limits of the value of programs and plans in helping conditions. How do these churches reveal a spiritual sickness? Tell of a new kind of revival needed in the churches.
6. Describe some of the incompetent proposals for rural church betterment and show their inadequacy.
7. Describe the speedy growth of social service hysteria. Quote Harnack and Peabody on the snare of putting prime emphasis on social service.
8. Show how the unbalanced emphasis fostered by irresponsible idealists has made it more difficult for responsible Christian bodies to give a proper emphasis.
9. Tell of the value and limitations of institutional effort.
10. Give the story of Spring Hill Church in North Carolina.
11. Tell of the unsubstantiated claims of church unionists.
12. Give passages from the New Testament that bear on unity.
13. Tell of the relative value of spiritual unity and organic church union. What of Romanism and unity? Tell of the relation of union propositions to the violation of conscience. Tell of the mutual good will and spiritual unity of Southern Christian bodies. Do unionists commend their demands for more spirituality by their sarcasm toward the denominations?
14. Quote Joseph E. McAfee and G. Frederick Wells, showing that the union church does not work.
15. Give the central reason why the union church fails. Quote the article from "Rural Life" illustrating this. Show how

the very honesty of the people who go into a union church is the basis of trouble. Quote James Russell Lowell on compromise.

16. Give facts showing the country is not over-churched in the South, and that if it was, church-killing would not help the situation. Quote Wilbert L. Anderson on this.
17. Show how a worldly efficiency preachment is seeking to violate the liberty of God's people. Tell of towns from 500 to 1,500 population.
18. Give from New Testament facts showing our Lord's idea of efficiency. Show that real efficiency for Christian bodies is in obedience to God rather than worldly wisdom.

The ministry itself will be the chief pioneer of the revitalized country church. The agricultural college and State educational leaders are master builders in this new order, but when the arch of the social structure is to receive its keystone they look for one man to place it—the modern country preacher. And how will the rural preacher succeed? First, by informing himself. The literature is knee-deep. There is a long list of books. Not that he needs at first to read them all, but he needs to get into sympathetic, intelligent touch with the movement to improve country life and the institutions which minister to it. Above all let the preachers of a countryside form a study unit, wherein together they may grapple with the subjects which pertain to country church and country life efficiency.—Ward Platt.

CHAPTER V.

THE COUNTRY MINISTER.

1. The ministry needed. The ministry needed will have good intellectual and spiritual gifts, will see that there is a large and worthy service to be rendered in the rural pastorate, and will desire to perform that service. To the fulfillment of these conditions, many constructive forces must lend their aid. There must be a more just realization of the worth and dignity of country life, a better grasp of the strategic opportunity of the country pastorate in inspiring and guiding the new rural life, and an understanding that the sources of urban purity and national safety are largely to be determined by the quality of the life of the open country. On the part of educational institutions, there must be a juster and more intelligent interpretation of rural life values, and, most of all, the responsible opinion of the religious bodies must reject and disavow the tacit popular understanding that a preacher confesses himself inferior to his fellows when he leaves the college or seminary for the country pastorate.

2. Denominational responsibility. It is difficult to tell of the kind of preachers needed without seeming to intimate that those now in the country are not what they ought to be. It is a fact that we have some preachers who are unfit, both in the country and in the towns. The increase of popular education is making this unfitness apparent in many a rural community. We must make it clear that we respect and value the men we now have, and, at the

same time, that we must have many more rural preachers, and that these must be trained and capable men who shall go to and stay in the country pastorate because they prefer it. It would be an embarrassing confession for a denomination four-fifths of whose churches are rural, which is the case with Southern Baptists, to admit that they have no better prospect to hold out to their rural churches, in a day when rural life is undergoing the throes of a re-birth, than that they must be content with the untrained and poorly-equipped men who enter the ministry, because the cities must be supplied first, and they need all the able and trained men. The independence with which each congregation and preacher with us form the pastoral relation, does not take the responsibility entirely from the denomination. It cannot close its eyes and see perpetuated a program under which, in the territory where its greatest strength has been, many of the churches are fading away in a chronic anaemia, and fail to reap the consequences. Such a program would either discredit the power of our democracy to meet great issues by prompt and capable action, or discredit those whom the denomination trusts to see such problems for it and propose plans to meet them.

3. The preachers we have. There are about 9,000 pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention, who serve 24,500 churches. Approximately 4,000 of them have urban pastorates and 5,000 have rural fields. These 5,000 men serve 20,000 churches. The once-a-month system is the abomination of desolation among rural churches in the South. It is the great over-topping weakness in our whole system. But it is sufficient in this chapter to consider the country preacher. He is discussed much, and often not with sympathy and comprehension. He seldom answers the unen-

lightened representations concerning his work and situation. He is not at those centers where opinion is so much formed, and where it almost entirely gets the assurance and opportunity to project itself on the reading public. If the author may claim no other fitness for writing of the country minister, he has at least suffered with him and felt for him when he has read characterizations of him which were devoid of fine sympathy and understanding. The writer has been a rural pastor. If in the providence of God he may render such service again, he shall be content, and shall pray God to make him big enough to see and man enough to do what is needed. Probably less than one-fifth of these rural preachers have enjoyed special theological training. Certaining not more than one thousand, and probably fewer, of the men who serve twenty thousand country church of Southern Baptists in this day of great industrial quickening and change, have enjoyed special vocational training.

4. Their record of service. The machinery of modern scientific surveys, so-called, has no apparatus for sounding the depth of the social needs which the rural preachers have served. It is not scientific to undertake to present present needs, without a due comprehension of how those needs have arisen and of the forces through which they have heretofore been satisfied. Moreover, a really scientific study of the country church and its preacher would not afford the impetus necessary to do the required work. The disengaged and sometimes supercilious air with which some who speak in the name of science approach great questions of the spirit and of the personalities of men, measurably disqualifies them for such tasks. The country preachers of the South, poorly paid and far removed from

fame, have done the greater part of all which has been done to make sweet and pure the lives of the masses of the citizenship. Largely through their work, the early settlements were fused into the commonwealth, law and order made possible, and the State given its stability. From their words and example and handclasp the people have learned spiritual purpose and had their courage renewed. Their impress has been upon the life of nearly every man and woman who in town or country or city are now rendering high and unselfish service to the community. Needy as is the rural church situation today, if we had to be bereft either of scientists and expert uplifters, or of the service of the country preachers and churches as they are, we should try to get along with the churches and preachers.

5. Classes of country preachers. There are not fewer than four classes of rural preachers. There are the men whose powers have been nurtured by scholastic education, the men of strong personality who have often with marked success educated themselves, the loyal untrained men, and the indifferent and reactionary men. In a few of the older States, especially in Virginia, Maryland, and South Carolina, there has been for long an influential group of educated country pastors. Their worth is generally recognized by the responsible leaders of the denomination, though it is not yet clear that the popular denominational opinion is equally discerning. There are men of this same class in the other States. Though their number is still relatively small, it embraces preachers of fine gifts and culture, who have chosen the country field of labor because they see its great possibilities. These men are the forerunners of a better day in rural religious conditions, and are worthy to be placed on a roll of honor among Baptists. Some of

them have refused the calls of city churches, because they believe there is a more fruitful field for cultivation where they are. May God rapidly increase their number. Many such are needed if the country church is capably to redirect its energies to meet the changed demands of the new industrial civilization.

6. Self-educated men. Equally impressive is that group of rural preachers with commanding personality and a large degree of self-education, both from books and from experience. They have in our rural church history played a more influential part than any other class of men, and are still to be found in many a rural pastorate. The recent persistent drain on our resources for material for city pulpits has taken the seminary graduate first and these men second, sometimes finding the self-trained man the stronger. But the graces of oratory and polished manners are in much more requisition in the city, and there are fortunately still men of commanding personality who are unwilling to exchange the social simplicity of rural life for the artificial conventionalisms which hedge and harass the pastor of a fashionable city church. By reading and the study of men, these preachers have developed an intellectual and moral leadership among rural communities which is more influential and helpful, though less conspicuous, than it is usually possible for a pastor to gain in an urban environment.

7. Faithful untrained men. These are usually one- and two-talent men. In the sight of God, the one-talent man is as pleasing as the man of ten talents. If he is more faithful than his more gifted brother in the use of his one talent, he outranks him. The one-talent country preacher is practically always uneducated and his natural

gifts are limited. But many of these are doing all they can do to take care of the spiritual destitution about them. They may be keenly conscious of their deficiencies, but they are moved by a noble devotion to fill the spiritual vacuum around them, which an inadequate denominational program has not discerned or provided for. The author met such a young preacher in the Highlands of Southwest Virginia. The young man preached to two churches for a year, giving three weeks to revival meetings, for a total salary of $13.20. With his little family he lived in a two-roomed cottage on thirty acres of land for which he was trying to pay. He worked for a neighboring farmer part of the time, in exchange for a horse with which to plow his own small field of corn, and on Sundays walked to his churches, six and fifteen miles away. In the same region, another preacher told me he worked during the week at his little grist mill on the mountain stream and walked to his churches on Sundays. His annual salary was a "free-will" offering, which averaged less than $30. He made his living at the mill, and then gave himself practically without support to do what he could for the churches. These may be extreme cases, but the situation of many hundreds of rural preachers among Southern Baptists is not essentially different. They are practically supporting themselves and their families by other work and preaching the best they can on Sundays. It is true that there are country preachers who hold on to business operations during the week, long after they might secure a support from the churches, and these merit admonition and rebuke rather than sympathy. Still I have not overdrawn the pitiful situation of many men serving weak churches. If such men as these did not take hold and do the best they can to supply the

spiritual destitution around them, what one of all those who neglect and sometimes speak censoriously of them, is willing to give his life to supplying the lack which we deplore? Until we are, modesty may fitly characterize such references as we make to the men who supply these needy churches.

8. Men who stand still. There are still other types of preachers in country churches. The weakling is to be found, who does his best to let the church alone in doing and not doing whatever tradition and penuriousness may suggest. These men announce mission collections with an apology, if at all. They have been known to tell the brethren from the pulpit that the pastor knows they are not able to give much, "but let us help, brethren. Give whatever you feel like." The preacher who definitely sets himself against progress is more worthy of respect than the time-server, for if he is converted he will sound a positive note, whereas the other man will with difficulty become anything far removed from zero. In retarded rural sections are still to be found not a few preachers who are fixed in their opposition to missions, education, and all progress. The ignorance of the people often makes it easy for the preacher to fortify them against the influence of any chance ray of light which might disquiet them from their habitual repose. The city preacher preaches for money and is proud. Mission money does not get to the missionary—except maybe ten cents out of the dollar; Baptist Conventions serve the world and evil, not God. Such are the fulminations of these men, and their attacks are as shrewd as they are unscrupulous. Covetousness seeks excuses even among far more enlightened people. What hope is there that it shall not do so among the ignorant?

Are these people really Christians? Doubtless they are, and in the Judgment, when their works of wood, hay, and stubble shall be burned up, we who have not loved them as we ought and who have not with more patience and understanding sought to lead them forward, will not, in connection with our treatment of them, assay any gold and silver and precious stones.

9. The preacher the key. The Country Life Commission has given scientific endorsement to a persisting popular belief, by declaring that the rural preacher is "the key to the country church problem." He is the one man without whom the intensification and adaptation of the country church program to meet modern industrial and social conditions cannot take place. He is the one man in whom adequate vision and purpose will most probably find a leverage which can overcome the solidified inertia which is to be found in country churches which have no idea of anything else than their outworn pioneer practices. There are hundreds of instances in which such pastors have already conquered an inertia which by long habit had actually crystallized itself into a faith. But a grievous injustice has been done and a lack of comprehension shown, when this great question has been waived aside with the remark that the pastor is the key to the situation. To begin with, we have seen in the above paragraphs something about the condition of these pastor-keys. If they were all bright and shining, the 5,000 keys could never unlock all the doors of opportunity which lie before rural Christendom in our 20,000 rural churches in the South. But these keys vary all the way from polished and strong to rusty and bent. Some of them cannot be expected to open the doors which need to be opened. The

majority of them find themselves handicapped in door-opening on account of the rusty locks presented by the churches.

10. The rusty lock. The church is the "lock" by the same token which makes the preacher the "key." Thousands of these locks are encrusted in the accumulated rust of generations of solidified habit. It is a pathetic case, but sympathy must not let the patient remain at ease in Zion, lest death shall succeed slumber. If one of these churches was a new band organizing in a new community, it would go forward in a vigorous service. But they have positively for so long done next to nothing beyond an annual evangelistic effort, that they do not believe they can do anything else. Their trouble is as much a psychological paralysis as it is unwillingness. When shown the necessity of change, their faces are often pathetically wistful, but they shake their heads and continue in the treadmill of once-a-month preaching by an absentee preacher, whom they do not half support for even one-fourth of his time. To remove an inertia so pronounced, which withstands infection from the abounding material progress all around it, will require real understanding and a real spirit of helpfulness. The pastors who serve our country churches scarcely average more than $450 salary a year, in a time when it requires not less than $1,000 for a family to live in modest comfort even in the less expensive rural environment of the South. There is only one key to four locks, and these human keys with families to support have to devote much time to other work than church interests, so that they may unlock resource-doors wherewith to pay for bread and meat and clothes for the family, and for the education of their children. It is too

great a subject, rural life needs are too important, the strengthening of the churches to inspire it too vital, and their outworn practices too evidently inadequate and prophetic of disaster, for a great Christian body which expects to keep its own self-respect and to command that of the Christian world, calmly to waive the matter aside with the statement that the pastor is the key. Such inertia in fact is akin to that of the churches and has not the mitigating circumstance of lack of abundant opportunity to know better.

11. Vision necessary. Among the qualifications for fitness for rural pastoral service is a vision of the importance of the work and a desire to do it. If young preachers can be brought to see that the rural field affords an opportunity for a constructive and sacrificial service, they will gladly go to the country to work, without any one needing to put before them the attractions of country life. The very difficulties will draw them, once they are brought to see that it is a man's full work and God's work to overcome the inertia of generations and equip our rural life to go on with its appointed task of producing men and women with idealism and force to maintain its own best traditions, and in Church and State and the business mart to supply human material for leadership. It was the passion of John Frederick Oberlin to serve God in some needy field in which no other man wanted to work. He found it in the bleak Vosges Mountains in France, among a population ignorant, prejudiced, depraved, and almost hopeless. He spent his life there. During the first few years the spiritual dullness and mental stupidity wrought so against his every effort, that a weaker man would have fled. Oberlin built a road to bring the lonely backwoods into

possible touch with its own parts and with the world beyond. He started a school—three schools. He made bricks without straw. He did a hundred times what nine preachers out of ten would call the impossible. He gave his life to his people—people from whom others had turned aside. The result? Villages and countryside transformed; love from a great group of people, whose great-grandchildren blessed his name; a reputation which broke out beyond the lonely ramparts of his mountains and thrilled France and then the world. Thus does true faithfulness in doing the despised things which are worth while, often come into its reward even in this present world. Oberlin will be remembered when all the world has forgotten the names of distinguished court preachers who spoke before kings and were toasted by princelings and the favored of fortune. Wrote a preacher recently, who had something of this spirit: "I have never had a church yet, but where, if I had been a big enough man, I could have solved the problem." In the face of such spiritual heroism and understanding, shall we not relegate to oblivion that phrase, so often used by preachers: "I want a larger field of usefulness, which will really test my powers." Ambition is proper, and to long to have power with men is proper. But in Christ the way to power and greatness is service—not the acclaim and recognition of the world, or even of undiscerning good men. The rural field affords in this country unnumbered opportunities for the fruitful exercise of this spirit on the part of our most capable preachers.

12. Missionary spirit required. In what essential respect does this spirit differ from that which leads consecrated young men and women to give themselves for service on the foreign field? There are at least two re-

spects in which the sacrifice often required will be greater in the country pastorate. The matter of support will be more uncertain, and the capable young preacher who elects the country service, instead of being applauded and encouraged by good people, must usually suffer their neglect or misunderstanding and bear the surprise of his fellow-theologues that a man of his parts should go to the country! The author would rather soften his words than make them sharp. If Baptists have sinned in this thing, their fault is also his fault, but he finds it difficult to keep his mind in sustained thought upon the way the great body of rural churches have suffered in our popular religious opinion, without crying out against it. Besides this uneven fortune of the rural pastor, he must also endure some real hardships. Among these are isolation from other ministers and congenial friends, lack of mental stimulation from without, the beggarly small salary, the absence of school advantages for his children, and the prospect that he will be kept too poor to go to religious conventions or to buy books to keep from intellectual rust. But there are scores of splendid young fellows who would be perfectly willing to try grips with all these difficulties, if only they saw the job was worth the tussle, and that the men from whom they unconsciously imbibe their opinions applauded their decision.

13. Must teach as well as evangelize. Baptists have had and still have great reason for thankfulness for the passion for evangelism, which has been a characteristic of our denomination. It would be fatal if we lost it, but it will be almost equally fatal if we do not add to it a passion to teach converts. Speaking in general terms, we have not done so. Our educational efforts have made fine

progress, but the mass of the denomination has never yet mustered behind this battle front. Here, as at every point in the real application of principles to the local church, the pastor is the key. Our once-a-month program is an implicit confession that the idea of religion among the majority of our people is still to "get religion" in the revival meeting, and afterwards to live with rectitude in one's personal relations. Great as these principles are, they are only the foundation on which to build a personality capable of and devoted to the service of God and men. General observation will confirm the statement that, with gratifying but all-too-few exceptions, our country preachers confine themselves largely to evangelistic sermons, with occasional excursions into the realm of polemical doctrines. They are not usually preaching the peculiar denominational doctrines too much, and some of them not enough, but these and the evangelistic appeals partially lose significance because they are not balanced by constructive teaching and a setting forth of those doctrines which evidently eventuate in practical effort. This defect is radical. The once-a-month system and lack of study on the part of the preachers are the chief causes for it. The inadequacy of this practice has become crucial in the fact that the country people are now much better informed than they used to be. Nearly all of them read, and many of them are educated. Salvation by grace through faith is fundamental, but the Christian life means more, and for a preacher forever to preach on the same subject is for him to fail to inspire the lives of boys who can raise 200 bushels of corn to the acre and of girls whose minds are alert and inquisitive. "To assume," says Ward Platt, "that the country pastor can be less able in the pulpit and less

fertile in resources than the city pastor is to confess ignorance of the whole subject. No audiences better know preaching when they hear it or respond more readily to sane leadership than those whose houses of worship adjoin open fields."

14. What the pastors can do. A competent country church program will first endeavor to add to the efficiency of the pastors who are now doing all that has been done for the country churches, and it will hold these men in the highest consideration, for they are the under-shepherds of God. In our Baptist system we can claim no right of approach to them and their probelms except the right of fellowship and helpfulness. This is all the denomination needs, if it will just use it tactfully and earnestly. But the pastors themselves must be urged to use every available means to equip themselves to lead their churches into a fuller life. The modern country preacher has no wilderness roads to travel, no backwoods individualism to subdue and nurture, no rough pioneer ways to make tractable. But we have a new industrial civilization to conquer for Christ. The aggressive manhood and consecration of the pioneer preachers, applied to these modern needs, would not leave a result of inertia and inefficiency. To be their equals we must equip ourselves to serve our own day, instead of going on in a treadmill of outworn tradition. Even the poorly-paid country preacher must find money to buy a dozen good books yearly. His reading should include scientific farming, as well as theological works. The study will make him more abreast of the day in preaching. Our theological seminaries have provided correspondence courses of study which the pastor may take at home. They are carefully selected and most informing. Hundreds of preachers can

and ought to take them. Perhaps even more promising, because it provides teaching by personal contact, are the institutes which are being started in several States, in which groups of preachers come together a week for study. The best developed effort of this kind for rural preachers is probably in Alabama, where for several years winter schools of a week each have been conducted for the preachers in ten separate sections of the State. Three or four able teachers are engaged and the work has grown popular. The average attendance is from fifteen to thirty. A total attendance of 300 was expected in the winter of 1916. Country pastors may also get valuable hints from the agricultural colleges. A letter to one of these will bring a response which will convince the preacher that these institutions are alert and aroused on the subject of the rural church.

15. Educational institutions. Our educational institutions can do much for the country church by teaching their students about the social and economic significance of rural life. They should furnish eyes through which the plastic minds of the students may see the attractions and compensations of life in the country. A young woman in Cornell University, who had had much experience in urban life, ended her reply to Liberty H. Bailey, the noted country life and farm specialist, as to why she had chosen the country as a place to live, with the remark: "It is only people of experience who can fully appreciate the country and what it can give." It seems to be true, but has the accumulated experience of mankind no word of illumination for the young ruralite, dreaming of what he shall do with his life? If colleges have not spoken words that will help young persons to know some of the basal things which

would enable them to choose wisely in deciding what to do with their lives, I am of the opinion that they can do so and ought, and that they can teach the facts with hope of success. Particularly do the young preachers who attend these colleges need to have opened up to them the worth and attractions of a life of service for people in the open country.

16. The theological seminary. There is a growing demand that the theological seminaries shall provide a special course in rural sociology, rural social organization, and allied subjects, with the view of training a rural ministry. The seminaries doubtless feel that their courses of study are already heavily laden. It may be too much to assert the practicability of such a department, but it may without hesitation be declared that there is need that the theological schools shall cultivate among their students an atmosphere more conducive to making country service attractive. At least ninety percent of our Southern Baptist preacher-supply is rural. Practically every one of the young preachers thinks he knows all about the country which is to be known, and most of them have already decided against the country as a field of labor. For the institution to open up the large significance of rural problems and the need of adequate spiritual leadership, by appealing to the heroic in these young men, would be to turn a large body of determined and capable preachers to the country. Several theological seminaries have established a special department to fit men for rural pastorates. It is a field of service relatively more important with Southern Baptists than with any other American Christian group. It is difficult to see how a busy theological seminary will find the time adequately to press the call of the

country on its students without bodying forth the sentiment in some actual study of conditions and needs.

17. The seminary's unequaled opportunity. Theological seminaries, as a class, have not done an equal part by the rural churches. The ideal of ministerial success held up to the young minister in the class room of the average theological school is a metropolitan pulpit. They get nearly all their students from country churches and in the country in the South for long will be three-fourths of the people to be reached, and yet the average theological graduate goes out from these schools with the belief that to take a country pastorate, except perhaps as a temporary "practicing ground," is to confess that he is inferior to his fellows! Theological seminaries are not peculiarly to blame for this. The false valuation which has come to be put on country work is the result of many conspiring causes. But the theological school has unequaled opportunities, through the teaching of its professors and through special lectures on country problems by rural life experts, to correct this false, not to say unworthy, minifying of the country pastorate. The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville has perhaps more than any similar institution placed the work of foreign missions on the hearts of its students. For many years, it has given a day nearly every month to the consideration of this cause. One result has been that the Foreign Mission Board has gotten an exceptionally large number of its missionaries from this institution, and the applications are usually ahead of its ability to make appointments. The seminary is to be congratulated on this high service. But there is a growing number of God's people who will desire that some of this same splendid spirit of idealism inculcated at Louisville and at

the Southwestern Seminary, which leads young preachers to undertake a hard job in China, which seems immensely worth doing, shall be directed to the equally hard and far less esteemed job of vitalizing country churches and rural life here at home. This task is also immensely worth while. Under the impetus gathered from the virile leadership of pioneer preachers and nourished by another generation of country preachers, these country churches have given us as a spiritual body nearly all we have, and we have in return given them next to nothing. Now, in the mutations of social and economic forces, these country churches, which uncomplainingly gave their best, are in grave need of vitalization and re-direction. Have our young preachers the spirit to undertake the job? It is believed they have. In a just perspective, nearly everything the Christian bodies are fostering will be seen to depend upon it, including the maintenance of great theological schools, a Christian civilization, and a triumphant foreign mission program.

18. We must honor the country pastor. If our Christian bodies really want good men to man country pulpits, let them show that they honor such men. It is generally believed that they do not do so, and the conviction is hardly without foundation. Dr. Hulbert G. Beeman, of St. Paul, Minnesota, declared before the Northern Baptist Convention: "Young men are staying out of the rural pastorate, not because it is hard or unpromising, but because it is considered inferior. If a young man of special gifts goes into the country, it awakens comments of surprise. If he stays by his task in the country through the years because he has caught a vision of its possibilities, people wonder why he is not promoted to some city church. In denominations where pastorates are held by appointment, the one

who goes to the country loses grade. Baptists claim to be democratic, but the rural pastor has not received due recognition at our hands." The author here takes on himself the responsibility of making similar confession for Southern Baptists. The fact that we have fewer cities seems to have given us more infatuation for them. We hear from scores of men who want to change fields. Most of them want a bigger city place, which they consider a larger field of usefulness. Few of them seem to think it possible to strike out into the country where more workers are needed. Back of their false attitude is that of denominational opinion.

19. "Buried" in the country! Our ministers need to learn to honor the country field. The disfavor in which many of them hold the rural pastorate is sometimes expressed by one of them in the assertion that he does not intend to bury himself in the country. In the country he would find the minds and hearts of people less distracted and preoccupied and easier to reach with the gospel message, but he is unwilling to "bury" himself among them. It is there he would find the Lincolns and Lees and Jacksons and Calhouns and Washingtons and Jeffersons of the future, but he would be "buried!" It is there he could help the nascent leaders who forty years from now will be bearing the brunt and burden of the battle at the front of our Baptist hosts—the Broaduses and Carrolls, the Hatchers and Eatons, the Pendletons and Burrows', the Graves' and Manlys, the Jeters and Whitsitts, the Furmans and Kerfoots, the Tichenors and Willinghams, the Mells and Mercers, the Dickinsons and Howells, the Gambrells and Mullins' and Truetts, the great pastors and the secretaries and professors of learning. Ninety-five percent of these to-day are prattling about the knees of a godly

mother in a country home, or perchance are in a one-room country school, or out in the field at the lowly task of picking cotton, while the song of equinoctial winds in the tree-tops near the field stir strange dreams in their young hearts. Buried in the country! An Oberlin spent a life among the adamantine denseness of the backwoods of the mountains of France, lifted up a whole population, and a hundred years later, the world acclaims him. A Richard Baxter, poor in health, spent most of his life at Kidderminster, a poor country parish, but neither he nor the public seemed to think that he was "buried." The author of devotional books second in fame only to those of that other countryman, John Bunyan, Baxter's name is still a household word, and Kidderminster a shrine which draws countless pilgrims. Charles Kingsley spent his life as pastor at Eversley, an uninteresting English rural village, but did not long remain "buried." Men and women from all over the world made their way to that out-of-the-way sanctuary to hear Charles Kingsley preach. Nor did he heed the calls to larger places, which followed close on the heels of great repute! The elder P. H. Mell was for forty years pastor of two country churches in Georgia, meantime refusing calls to half the larger city pulpits in the South. If he was "buried," Southern Baptists showed a persistent obtuseness in recognizing it, for they elected him president of their Convention fifteen times. In a parable, our Lord told of leaven which a woman buried in three measures of inert meal and it leavened the whole lump. That is what leaven is for, and that is what it does. Where may a preacher of Christ expect the leaven of the gospel to permeate with saving power more human material, and fit it for the Kingdom, than in the open country of the South!

The preacher who is not willing to be "buried" to such an end away from what the world calls prominence, needs first of all to make a new and complete surrender of himself to God.

20. Correctives. Bishop Warren A. Candler, of Atlanta, was once presiding over a Methodist Conference in a Southern State. He was reading the appointments for preachers for the ensuing year. The great body of rural churches came first. He was interrupted presently by a certain well-groomed banker, with his sparse hair carefully parted in the middle, who arose to ask the bishop if he had provided in his appointments a preacher for the big First Church of which the banker was a member in the largest city in the State. "Brother," replied the bishop, "how many preachers has your church produced since you have known it?" "Well, I have been in it twenty-five years; I do not remember any," replied the banker, who found the questioning bishop more discomposing than a whole board of directors. "Brother," continued the bishop, "I am appointing good preachers for these country churches, because we must depend upon them to produce preachers for such churches as yours. I will appoint one for you after we get through with these." It was an argumentum ad hominem and good humor. It also contained a truth which needs to be put before religious conferences and conventions. In our day country preachers are seldom chosen for places on important denominational boards or committees. The whole attitude of our Christian bodies toward country churches and pastors needs to be shaken up and changed, for as it now stands, this situation is a reproach and a shame. A determined effort to remove this reproach is the least that these bodies can afford, if

they really expect to convince the public that they realize what great issues depend upon maintaining a full and satisfying rural life in the South.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER V.

1. Give the leading qualifications of the rural ministry now needed. Show how every agency of the denomination can help to develop such a ministry.
2. What is the proper attitude toward our present rural ministry? What kind of recruits must it have? Has the denomination a responsibility in the premises, and how?
3. Give the number of Southern Baptist preachers now in country and town. Show how the rural preacher has not had his due in an understanding sympathy from his brethren. What proportion of them have had special training?
4. Show that it is not scientific for the expert surveys to ignore the value of the service rural preachers have rendered. Show what the pioneer preachers and their successors accomplished.
5. Name four classes of rural preachers. Describe the value of those who have had vocational training. Is their number increasing?
6. Tell about self-educated country preachers. Name some reasons why many of these prefer rural pastorates.
7. Give an estimate of the worth of many untrained preachers. Give illustrations showing their faithfulness and poor pay. If these men did not do what they could, are there others in sight who would do what is needed?
8. Tell about weakling preachers. Tell about strong men who are reactionary. Give specimens of their utterances to discount co-operative effort. Why do they have much success in such efforts to discourage Kingdom work? Are such people really Christians?
9. Tell how the preacher is the key. Tell of good work many pastors have accomplished. Can the denomination

escape its own responsibility by calling the preacher the key?

10. Tell of the "rusty locks." Show how churches have a psychological paralysis. Tell about pastoral support and the necessity of many pastors making a living outside of the ministry. Show that we cannot waive the matter aside by calling the pastor the key.
11. Show how vision is necessary for successful rural pastoral service. Illustrate this by the story of Oberlin. Will Oberlin be remembered for "burying" himself to do good? Tell about the proper limitations of ambition for the preacher.
12. Show why the missionary spirit is necessary in rural church service. Give some of the hardships of the rural pastorate. On what condition will such hardships become attractive to capable young preachers?
13. Show how among Southern Baptists evangelism has largely eclipsed the passion to develop the new life. Have we had good educational progress? What does the once-a-month program implicitly confess? Tell of the subjects which most rural preachers treat in sermons. Name a radical defect in many of these. What effect on the situation has the increasing number of educated country people?
14. Tell of our duty to help rural pastors to be more efficient. What would now be a suitable moral equivalent for the rugged strength and devotion of the pioneer preachers? Tell of the value of good books and ministers' institutes for special study. Tell what is being done in Alabama.
15. What can our educational institutions do to help? Quote and give your opinion of the utterance by a young woman in Cornell University.
16. Tell of the growing demand for more attention to training a rural ministry in the theological seminaries. Show the value of such service.
17. Have theological seminaries generally emphasized the worth of the rural field? Show why they are not peculiarly to blame for this. Tell of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's "Mission Day" and its value to

foreign missions. Show that the rural field should be similarly magnified.

18. Tell why we must honor the country pastor more. Quote Dr. Hulbert G. Beeman. Does his utterance represent conditions at the South?
19. Show the unfitness of a preacher thinking he will be "buried," if he serves the rural field. Tell the class of future leaders he will find in the country, plastic and ready to be molded. Tell of Oberlin, Baxter, Kingsley, and Mell. Were they "buried?" Is the country a good place to bury the leaven which must furnish the ferment for social righteousness?
20. Tell of Bishop Candler's experience with the banker from the large city church. Do we properly honor rural preachers on our denominational boards and committees? Why is a determined effort to remove this reproach greatly to be desired?

CHAPTER VI.

THE ONCE-A-MONTH CHURCH.

1. A radical weakness. Once-a-month preaching is the great outstanding weakness of the rural churches in the South. There are other important elements in the problem, but thousands of church doors opened for a preaching service only one day in thirty are the central difficulty. More trained ministers are needed and better pastoral support, but a program which shall provide something more adequate than a monthly sermon by an absentee preacher is the crucial and first need of the country church. An inheritance from pioneer days, this custom was not adequate even then. To persist in it now would be practically to announce that this chronic church torpor is quietly to be allowed to eventuate in death. The process is already far advanced in many sections of the North and Middle West, and there are signs it is beginning in the South. Observers wonder that a church with a generation of chronic inertia behind it dies without complaint, but it is the usual way in which comatose patients die. Will Southern Christian bodies face the facts and save the patients, or await the end, ready when it is too late, to feature the figures of the alarming mortality?

2. Country not over-churched. In the books on country church and life the statement that the average country community is over-churched is one of the stock assertions, and the cure usually proposed is the combination of these churches, of whatever denomination, into one big com-

munity church. It may be said in reply that two or three churches often succeed in a community and not seldom one church in undisturbed possession fails. But in the South, rural communities are not usually over-churched. Perhaps the chief exceptions are in those places into which Northern Christian bodies have pushed themselves, though their Southern brethren of the same denomination were already on the field. Baptists have not done this. It is curious and instructive that the cry for union churches should come almost entirely from the section which has been most active in planting additional churches in communities in other sections of the country already served by the denomination of the new-comers. Rural Christendom in the South is not over-churched, because the great majority of the rural churches belong to only two denominations, the Baptists and the Methodists, with an influential but much smaller number of Presbyterian bodies. In Kentucky and Missouri the Disciples are strong in many country communities. But, with the exception of these States, hardly fewer than ninety percent of the rural churches are either Methodist or Baptist. These two denominations understand and respect each other and, generally speaking, each has found more than enough to engage its best efforts, without unduly encroaching on rural territory occupied and served by the other. The books on the country church have so regularly and sweepingly asserted that the rural communities in America are over-churched that it is gratifying to note that Dr. G. Walter Fiske in "The Challenge of the Country" does allow in a single sentence that this is not true of the South. As quite half of the rural churches in America are in the South, it is astonishing that of fifteen or twenty writers of

books which assume to speak for the whole nation, Dr. Fiske's is the only one which has even suggested that conditions differ in the South.

3. Alarming figures. Of 24,500 white Baptist churches in the Southern Baptist Convention territory, 20,000 are rural—in the open country or small towns. Of the rural churches, 18,000 have preaching only once a month, and about 18,000 are served by absentee pastors. Dr. John M. Moore, of Nashville, Tennessee, Home Secretary of the Southern Methodist Board of Missions, furnishes the following facts about Methodist churches in the same territory: There are 19,800 white Southern Methodist churches, 16,500 of which are rural. Of the rural churches, 15,000 have once-a-month preaching, and 11,000 are served by absentee pastors. The Presbyterian group is much smaller, but has usually served rural communities well wherever it has had a local church. Dr. S. L. Morris, of Atlanta, Georgia, Secretary of the Southern Presbyterian Home Mission Board, in a pamphlet, "The Country Church," declares that of 3,430 Presbyterian churches, 1,355 are located in strictly rural sections. Of the rural churches, 271 are pastorless. It is probable many of them are once-a-month churches.

4. Baptists and Methodists. It will be seen that out of 44,300 white Baptist and Methodist churches in the South, 36,500, or eighty-two percent, are rural, and 33,000, or ninety percent of all the rural churches, are dependent for instruction on once-a-month preaching. Of the rural churches of the two denominations, 29,000, or eighty percent, are served by absentee pastors. As large as is the absentee usage by Methodists, it is much less than with the Baptists, the absentee pastors of whose rural churches

are not less than ninety percent, while the Methodist absentee pastors are only sixty-six percent. The Methodist system cultivates some sense of obligation among the rural churches to help each other by forming fields among contiguous churches. It also puts moral restraints about the preacher, to the effect that he must live as conveniently as possible to all of the churches. This sometimes locates him in a town, but it usually places him in the immediate rural community of one of the churches and within easy reach of the others. The abounding Baptist independence of our churches and preachers, seems usually to recognize no such limitations of liberty in the interest of the common welfare. That it does not is not to the credit of Baptists, for it reflects either on our judgment or our unselfish concern for the Kingdom. In a future chapter, it will be shown that even this slight advantage in resident pastors and compact fields has in certain important particulars given the Methodists a better grip than the Baptists in country churches. There exists a supreme need that Baptists shall so discipline their liberty that it shall learn how to work in harness. If they do not do so, their liberty is not of the kind about which Paul writes.

5. The crisis of inertia. Often as we have occasion to regret that Northern writers on religious life and work in America do not understand Southern conditions or interpret them well, we perhaps should be grateful that they have spared us from setting forth before other sections the fact that the characteristic expression of church life in the South is of the once-a-month variety, and that the two largest denominations, which have nearly all the rural membership in this rural section of the nation, are in the matter of numbers and training almost overwhelmingly "once-a-month"

denominations. By common consent the rural church is the chief institution to which we must look for leadership in revitalizing and redirecting the life of the thousands of country communities in the South. But the once-a-month church cannot accomplish and must not be depended on to accomplish this task. It is utter nonsense to expect a work of such immense volume and importance to be done through the 33,000 rural communities, served by once-a-month churches named above, in the large majority of instances by "pastors" who live in some town or in an adjoining county! I am not unappreciative of the good which has been effected under this system. Credit is gladly given to some pastors who under this usage have achieved the almost impossible result of intelligently interesting their churches in the work of the Kingdom beyond, and, what is often more difficult, in their own communities. But the outstanding fact remains, so bold and convincing that it scarcely needs argument, that the great rural South will not and cannot by once-a-month churches be quickened with spiritual purpose and understanding adequate to dominate the life of the people in this day of the new civilization. For the responsible Christian bodies passively to accept this situation, as if it were inevitable, is to confess to the world that they are suffering from the same inertia which threatens the once-a-month church, and with less excuse.

6. The under-taught churches. A little calculation, based upon the figures given above, will show that, out of 36,500 rural Baptist and Methodist churches in the South, about 26,500 are closed up from preaching on an average Sunday, while 10,000 are open. In the open country the proportion is even more unsatisfactory, for a large part of

the rural churches which meet oftener than monthly are in villages and small towns. It is not too much to say that the accepted and accredited program for country church instruction in the South is the monthly sermon, which is about as little as the church can have without actually quitting and disbanding. Twelve sermons a year, preached at intervals of thirty days, give even the most resourceful pastor no adequate chance to teach his people in the doctrines of the Bible, or to make the application of those doctrines in missions, benevolence, or community service. The average once-a-month preacher clings to the a b c of evangelism, and to an occasional sermon to comfort the afflicted, with perhaps an annual deliverance on some particular denominational doctrine. Seeing the people so seldom, he is likely to think this is about the best he can do for them. Beautiful and powerful as is the story of the cross of Jesus, a preacher who grinds out much the same sermon about it, whatever his text may be, soon ceases to interest those among his auditors who most need the truth. It is thus that thousands of churches are sinking into an apathetic listlessness. It is remarkable that the situation in the South has so long remained that of retarded growth and has not become one of actual decadence. But we are on the threshold of this last stage in some sections. A letter just received from a Tennessee layman tells of eighteen pastorless Baptist churches in the Lebanon Association. The Home Board survey of 6,006 rural churches in 1914 showed that 212, or 3.5 percent, had disbanded within five years. (Appendix C). People who get so little food out of church life and teaching as is usually provided by the once-a-month sermon, in this day of intensified thought and living, are likely to come to the

conclusion that it is not much worse to have a dead church than to live their lives out in one which remains soundly asleep through all the years.

7. The "pastor." It is only by courtesy that we may speak of a once-a-month absentee preacher as a "pastor." He is really not a pastor, but a pulpit supply for infrequent stated periods. The pastor, in the New Testament sense, is the shepherd of the flock. But the absentee once-a-month preacher is not a shepherd of the flock. Coming into the community Saturday or Sunday morning, he preaches a sermon and perhaps visits two homes. He usually departs Sunday afternoon, not to be seen any more for another month, unless perchance it is found practicable to get him to come out when there is a marriage or a funeral. Joy and sorrow, trial and disappointment, temptation and perplexity, births, marriages, and deaths—the whole gamut of human experience is touched by the sheep of the fold in these communities, but the one man to whom the community would willingly look and has a right to look for help and guidance in such deep experiences, is at his home, perhaps far from the community. Such a "pastor" can be of very little aid in guiding and helping forward the community activities which are needed in every rural community, and to lead which he is nearly always the best suited man. In the light of the figures given above, we would perhaps be justified in saying that rural Christendom in the South has as a general thing gotten along without pastoral service. The shepherd whose service consisted in visiting and feeding his flock one day in the month, would not long have committed to him a valuable flock of actual sheep, for starvation and wolves would have, unchallenged, twenty-nine chances out of the thirty. The

automobile has entered into the situation in a way that should help country preachers to understand how it feels to be passed by for the town. It should strike in both with the young preachers, who practice on the country churches for a few years before they give themselves to town service, and with most country pastors who live in town and come out monthly to preach. In not a few rural communities, on any Sunday morning, the automobiles of some prosperous members hum by the little church, carrying them to the town or city church, where the pews are more comfortable, and there is probably more of fashion and possibly better music. It is a poor example for country church members to set and should be corrected. But it is something that ought to make many a country preacher ponder his own ways deeply, and many a city preacher too.

8. **Frequent pastoral changes.** Distressing as is the above statement, it does not adequately show the alarming absence of pastoral service which has generally characterized the rural church life of the South. The preacher who merely comes into the community once a month to preach a sermon, and perhaps after a visit in one or two homes, to go away again, does not even become acquainted with all the members of his flock, not to speak of the other people of the community, or the problems faced by different persons and by the community as a whole. And, as if this was not enough to reduce the pastoral service to a point approximating actual absurdity, the annual call abomination, and the corresponding restlessness of the preachers, have brought it about that very many of these churches change pastors every year. Dr. Charles King has made a survey of twenty-five churches in Salt River Association, in Missouri, which shows that the average period of pas-

toral tenure was only slightly over two years. It is probable that the period of service will not average more than this among most of the once-a-month churches. In other words, with a pastoral relation so meagre as to be almost negligible, even if the minister should spend many years in his circuit of churches, the case is made doubly perplexing and pastoral service more impracticable in the fact that the minister ordinarily leaves for another church before he has scarcely formed more than a hand-shaking acquaintance with his people! This "tenant system" of rural preachers and the frequency of the changes of pastors in the churches make one of the gloomiest tokens in the whole grave problem. It can be and must be remedied. It will be remedied, if the denominational leaders and agencies will direct to the subject half the prayerful thought and helpfulness it merits.

9. Two-sevenths minister, five-sevenths farmer. When the Lord calls a man to be a pastor and preacher, it is his duty to devote his entire life to the work of the Lord, if the way is open for him to do so. In pioneer America the way was open to preach, but both the necessity of making his support and other conditions very often closed the door of opportunity to the minister to give his week-days to pastoral and religious work. In backward communities this is still the case. On the other hand, it has come to pass that there are hundreds of country preachers in prosperous sections who have apparently accepted the once-a-month system as final, and also the pioneer tradition that pastoral service may be dispensed with, and that very little study is necessary to preach the gospel to country people. While the result does not justify the sarcasm of some modern uplifters, it is distressing and deplorable, and

is responsible for not a little of the unrest which is being observed among rural churches in many sections. Elsewhere the duty of the church to support the pastor is set forth. Here I remark that there are country churches in every Southern State, which are paying, not more than they ought to pay or even so much as they ought, but more than the service they get is worth. In the long run, churches get about what they pay for in pastoral service. But there are many variations from this, and one of them is found when four churches pay a pastor an average of $200 each, and get from him in return not more than two days of service each in a month. For two-sevenths of their time preachers of this class get $800 a year, which is equal to a salary of $2,800 a year for the preacher who really gives his life to study, pastoral work, and preaching—much more than most preachers are paid who have answered the call to preach with their whole lives. Such a preacher is a farmer rather than a preacher. The churches have a right to better treatment at the hands of their pastors and should demand it. The pastor is under obligation to invite and inspire them to better things and to show them the value of real pastoral service. The preacher's duty includes holding up better ideals; when he ceases to lead the churches forward, he is unfit to serve them.

10. The neglected teaching. No sufficient teaching of converts is possible under this system. At a meeting of a week in the summer perhaps fifteen young converts are brought in and baptized. Then they are left to their own resources. Once-a-month preaching by an absentee pastor cannot and does not teach and train them for the new life. Next year more are brought in and treated in the same way. Gradually the impressionable and forward-looking young

converts settle down into the apathetic slowness of the church itself. They do not know that there is anything different. Perhaps they come to think that Christianity itself, after one gets religion, is only a matter of personal honesty and social passivity. Who can blame them? In our churches to-day are a million and a half members whose training (?) has been largely of this order. The Sunday-school has come into many of these churches and rendered a fundamental service of teaching, but not even the Sunday-school, the encouragement and vitalization of which is imperative, can possibly make up for the inertness of the church itself. Editor E. C. Routh exclaims in the Baptist Standard: "What are we going to do with the thousands of converts who have been buried with Christ in baptism during the past summer? Shall we be content to provide for them a preaching service once a month, or will we give ourselves in a worthy fashion to training them for glorious Christian service? There are no better people on earth. They are eager to serve. They have been evangelized and baptized. The task before us now, and this is peculiarly true of the country church, is to vitalize and utilize."

11. Non-participant in missions. Practically all of the large group of our churches which are non-participant in mission work and which are readiest at the least suggestion to develop a chronic suspicion that the Mission Boards are not using mission money properly, are the once-a-month churches. Few of their members read religious papers or other religious literature. If the pastor is constructive and progressive, which is not always true, he has no sufficient opportunity to teach them. To expect to remedy a lack so deep-seated and extensive by some published financial

scheme or a series of great mission meetings is entirely to miss the point. The great mass of Baptists to be reached probably do not know that this agitation is in progress, or they fail to understand what the agitators are driving after. If we seriously desire to help such churches, we must in method and scope of action adjust ourselves to their actual situation and needs. When we do so, we can reach them, and not till then. Certainly one of the first points in such a program will be to provide something better than a once-a-month pastoral service. If we have not the faith to confront a task so large and withal so removed from novelty and romance, perhaps we had as well give up the task of trying to help the churches forward. To talk eloquently of things entirely removed from their horizon and then run away, is only to confuse them without helping them to grapple with their actual needs. Dr. F. C. McConnell, of Atlanta, declares a Baptist church does not exist which cannot be reached for all denominational work, if we will only go after them aright. It is all a matter of efficient contact.

12. Community service. There is absolute unanimity among rural life authorities who have written in recent years that the country church is the institution and the rural preacher the man on whom we must chiefly depend for leadership to enable the average rural community to find again its lost-in-town soul and to furnish inspiration and direction to needed community enterprises. It is not desirable for the pastor to try to teach farmers how to farm, or to lead in farmers' organizations, stock-breeding, etc. His function is to lead his churches and to inspire leadership for other agencies of community service. What these may be will depend on the community. John Fred-

erick Oberlin built roads and planted orchards among the poor, dense Vosges mountaineers, but our country preachers for the most part serve men who know more about such things than they do. There remain many things a real pastor can encourage and direct. It may be the school needs improving, or a wholesome outlet to the social instincts of the people needs providing, or the people need to be encouraged to build better and more attractive and convenient homes and churches. It is in such things as these that the rural community will again find its soul, so often actually lost, and the young people be made satisfied, instead of running away at the over-prized and little-understood call of the city. The service here outlined can be rendered by the country church. It is being rendered by an encouraging number. But it cannot and will not be rendered by a once-a-month church with an absentee pastor.

13. Exceptions and bad examples. It is proposed to portray briefly the hopeless inadequacy of the Southern once-a-month church usage to serve the average country community of to-day. There is hardly space to note exceptions and limitations to the principles here set forth. It is true that some rural churches are better served by some pastors who live in towns than others are by men who live in the country. In some instances, a town is the geographical center for the pastor of several rural churches and the natural place for him to live. But these exceptions do not change the great outstanding need of a shaking up of our Baptist attitude from center to circumference on the almost universal pioneer custom which still obtains among our rural pastors and churches. Surely it is high time we should get a denominational conscience which shall function concerning the needs of the rural church. Not even

the brethren among us who by common consent are honored as leaders are always free from inconsistent practice toward country churches. In some cases editors of denominational papers, professors in our colleges, and other leaders add a little to their salaries and have the satisfaction of doing good when they accept the pastoral call of country or village churches for one or two Sundays a month. Without undertaking to lecture these good men, is it not unfortunate that they are by their own proceeding largely estopped from trying to show the churches the better way in which they so much need to walk? Certainly they should be alert to avoid standing in the way of the formation of a field which would support a pastor who could give his life to the work, instead of only one Sunday of each month to a church.

14. A pastor's worth in the country. Last week in an automobile on the church grounds at a South Carolina Association, Rev. J. T. Littlejohn told me what he had done with Red Hill Church in Edgefield County in that State. He has served this distinctly rural church for twenty years, for the last twelve living in his own home hard-by the oak grove in which it stands. Here is his story—it could be duplicated 5,000 times by Baptist country churches in the South, and ought to be: When he took hold at Red Hill, it was to preach once a month in a worn out, single-room building worth a few hundred dollars. His salary was $75 and they gave nothing to missions. The membership was eighty-five. In the churchyard, was a ram-shackle, single-room school building, which kept open four or five months during the year, and not a single boy or girl was going to college from the community. Land values in the community ranged from $2.50 to $5

per acre, for Red Hill was still in the shadow of post-bellum poverty. That was twenty years since. Now the church has 300 members, pays $350 salary, $235 for missions and benevolence, and $369 for miscellaneous work, has preaching one Sunday morning and two afternoons, worships in a neat building worth $5,000, and has in the yard a school building worth $3,000, in which four teachers conduct a regular graded school throughout the full school year. Land values in the community are now from $40 to $50 per acre, fifteen boys and girls a year are going from the community to college, and the population has more than doubled through the moving in of people attracted by a community which is alive and progressive. The increased land values alone in that community, within a radius of three miles, due largely to the presence of a live church, has been enough to pay Pastor Littlejohn a salary of $1,000 yearly for the next 756 years! Is the opportunity to attain such results a sufficient challenge to the powers of ambitious young preachers?

15. The country's worth to him. Pastor Littlejohn at first accepted a beggarly salary, but the success of his work in this and other churches raised it to a living wage. He settled in a community without a fit school for his children, but he led the people to establish such a school. It was doubtless lonely for his wife, but they served and waited and both the population and the social satisfactions of the community more than doubled. The travel-way of the pastor was not the railroad, but the roads across hill and dale, by growing crops, and through old pine fields, where the mournful soughing of the winds in the tree-tops whisper the story of a day when Negro slaves raised the cotton and the corn; where the dense copse now shelters the timid rabbit; and

where piles of stone, long ago gathered out of the way of plow and hoe, still lie as an humble monument of the South's picturesque past and the tragedy which it brought. The preacher who lives in the environment of nature and among people who are near to nature, will perhaps lack the alertness which his urban brother gains from continual contact with crowds, and the stimulation which comes from attrition with many passing currents of thought, but his people and environment have more to teach the soul of a man than the city procession and walls have. This pastor found little at Red Hill, but he builded much. He has fashioned a structure in human hearts and personalities which shall abide forever, than which no distinguished and eloquent pastor of a famed and wealthy urban church ever builded better. This pastor took a field when there was no suitable school for his boys. He led the people to build the school, and now there are two manly young sons ready for college, and one of them already decided to enter the ministry. He gave himself and his to God and the people, and God has honored him and has given him in this present life the things which are best worth having.

16. The elder P. H. Mell. In an earlier day in the South the dignity and worth of the rural field received among Baptists a more fit recognition by men of admitted strength who spent their lives in the rural pastorate. There was not a more notable illustration of this than that of the elder P. H. Mell, of Georgia, who for forty years was pastor of two country churches in the Georgia District Association. Calls came to him from prominent churches in Savannah, Atlanta, Memphis, Nashville, Montgomery, Columbia, and other cities, all of which he declined that he might remain with those two churches. For fifteen years he was pres-

ident of the Southern Baptist Convention, and his name is secure in the history of the denomination for the greatness of the service he rendered. He steadily set his face against the subtle flatteries by which the world seeks to convince even good men of mark that their light is largely wasted unless it shines in a city setting. He declared that there was no temptation to him to exchange the well filled churches and the appreciative, hungry hearers of the countryside for the surfeited and fatigued audiences, which are the lot of many urban pastors. He lamented the once-a-month habit of the rural churches. He preached twice monthly to each of his two churches, which were so near together that the people of both congregations could hear him every Sunday. He declared that the gospel should be preached in every church every Sunday, and gladly gave his life to help to bring two communities at least approximately to this ideal.

17. Forming fields. The first step in treating the habit of once-a-month preaching is the formation of fields between contiguous churches in which pastors shall be located. This would seem to be easy, but it is often anything but easy. Long habit of independent action on the part of each church usually makes it unready to co-operate with neighboring churches. The church may be wedded to some special Sunday in the month as its preaching day, and unwilling to change in order to form a field. Still, tactful leadership will usually be able to get four contiguous churches to form a field and locate a pastor. This is often difficult for the pastor himself to do, and may be best effected by a second worker. The Methodists accomplish this and other needed results through the presiding elder. Baptists have had no established agency by which the denomina-

tion may participate in "the care of all the churches." For, blessed as State Missions is, a State Secretary cannot begin to do the church-to-church helper-service needed. It would not be difficult in a compact field of four churches for each to have preaching services twice monthly, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. And all of the churches could have more pastoral service than the large majority of them are getting under the present indiscriminate thread-the-needle custom, by which preachers of rural churches in two or three adjoining counties in going to their Sunday appointments criss-cross with each other in an absurd manner. The independence of the average Baptist country church is so ingrained that even an expert Enlistment Worker sometimes finds it difficult to hold four of these units together and get them to unite on a single pastor. The few Enlistment men often accomplish it first by getting the strongest church in a proposed group to call a pastor and then leaving him, with such assistance as is practicable, to win the other timid but always independent churches to form the desired pastoral field. This is a wise method. A preacher should refuse to accept a church located in such relation to other churches as would easily enable them to form a field. Preachers are much at fault in this matter. Some of them will accept a church without regard to the fact that they are breaking up a field. Dr. Charles L. Greaves, of North Carolina, a recognized rural church authority, after reading the manuscript of this chapter, wrote: "The author deals leniently with the country preachers. On the whole this is just and wise. But one wishes he had taken a little freer hand with the large class of incompetents who underbid in salary and slip around tearing up pastoral fields which have been formed with much

labor." Men of this class discredit the rural ministry, and make our common liberty a thing of mirth to the profane. Every true friend of the churches must wish to help save them from the hands of such narrow and unfit preachers.

18. Twice-a-month churches. Under proper training and leadership thousands of once-a-month churches can be brought to have preaching twice monthly. There are now relatively very few country churches with twice-a-month preaching. But where this has been practised for a considerable time, the added strength and prominence of the church community are such that it gives an impression that their number is larger than it is. There are not a few country churches which are satisfied with the habit of monthly preaching and could be broken away from it only with great difficulty. There is a smaller number really not able to support a preacher for more than one-fourth of his time. But there are literally thousands which only await some capable, sympathetic leadership to break away from the oppressive bonds of an outworn anaemic practice which is often insensibly killing both church and community. They want to do it, they only need to be shown how and led. It is hardly conceivable that so great a Christian body as Baptists, with so large a rural membership, will not be alert and quick to stimulate and aid these churches so that they may come into a fuller and better expression of their life. While there are perhaps 8,000 rural Baptist churches in the South which with proper encouragement and leadership can be brought from monthly to twice-a-month preaching, there is a smaller number which now meet twice a month but which should have preaching every Sunday by a resident pastor. This is the ideal for a live country church and community. In such a pas-

torate the minister could often give Sunday afternoons to preaching at weaker points.

19. Parsonages needed. The Methodists have more rural parsonages in the South than the Baptists. Baptists have almost none. Once-a-month churches do not bother about parsonages, and absentee preachers in such churches do not usually want a parsonage. The attractions of a town home are stronger, or else the preacher sticks to his farm to make a living. It is safe to say that there are hardly more than 250 parsonages among the 20,000 rural Baptist churches in the South. This almost entire absence of parsonages among our country churches is the natural result of once-a-month preaching by absentee preachers, without regard to pastoral fields. Important as it is to have these homes for the pastors, it is a development which cannot come until the churches can be brought to form pastoral fields, and we will never have many until the backbone of the outworn once-a-month system ts broken. Often two churches in adjoining communities should be urged to buy a few acres of land together and erect on it a parsonage. It should be large enough to feed a horse and a cow, but too small to encourage the preacher to become a farmer. The joint ownership of a parsonage would be for them a fine first lesson in practical co-operation and inter-dependence, and would tend to give stability to the movement to locate a pastor and provide him with more opportunity to instruct the churches and the people in the communities.

20. The favor of God on the South. Students of rural life and country churches in other sections will doubtless be astonished that the rural religious life of the South has held together better with once-a-month preaching as the habit than it has usually done in the North and Middle West.

where this next-to-closing-up system has been in less use. There are several reasons, of which two are here given. The rural South has not been so heavily taxed for human material to make cities as the North and Middle West. The greatest advantage of the rural-South church, however, is that it nearly always serves a homogeneous population, while in the other sections the rural life equilibrium has been frequently disturbed by the coming in of European immigrants, with all kinds of religion and no religion, and it has been found difficult and sometimes impossible for society to absorb these new-comers. The purpose of calling attention to this here is to show that only the favor of God has given us a less rural church crisis than the North has, rather than a worse as well as a larger one. With the same strains which country life has had to bear in other sections, our rural church situation, under the sleepy once-a-month-absentee-pastor practice, would have utterly demoralized our rural spiritual resources—unless indeed God should have used some such means to arouse us out of our profound slumber and chasten us into alertness.

21. A critical question. Many things must be done to help forward our great mass of country churches into a capacity to serve completely the present rural life, but a warfare to the death against the long-established and almost universal habit of monthly preaching is crucial in the program of improvement. The preacher is the key, and more keys are needed. Men of vision and consecration are necessary, but among the first things requisite is that the denomination shall wake up to realize that, estimated by statistics and numbers, it is in the second decade of the twentieth century still only a "once-a-month" denomination! If this can sink in deep, I am confident that much

of the current unrest about the many churches which do not give to missions, and almost as many more upon which Kingdom service has not taken a deep hold, will find where most of the trouble really lies. The splendid devotion and idealism of our men and women will lead them to adjust their efforts to correcting this almost-suicidal weakness at the bottom, instead of pointing so regularly to fine schemes adapted for use at the top, where relatively so few of our churches are to be found. It will be almost ruinous for our Baptist body to continue to ignore the fact that our great mass of once-a-month churches served by absentee pastors, cannot in the present day possibly continue to furnish spiritual leadership adequate to hold and inspire the communities in which live more than half the entire population of the South. The prescription may need a shifting of ingredients, but the diagnosis is incontrovertible, and more than half the task of this volume shall have been accomplished if its presentments shall prove convincingly to Southern Christian bodies, and especially to our own denomination, that the patient is seriously sick and sure to grow worse, unless a suitable remedy is found and applied!

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VI.

1. What is the central weakness in the system in most rural churches? Is it remarkable inert churches should die without complaint?
2. Tell of the agitation about over-churched communities. Are there many over-churched rural communities in the South? Whence originates most of the cry for the union church? What are the strong rural religious bodies in the South? Do they get along harmoniously?
3. Give figures showing the condition of rural Baptist churches in the South. Give similar figures for the

Methodists. What of the Presbyterians?

4. Give figures to show the combined rural church situation of Baptists and Methodists. Compare the Methodist and Baptist systems in rural districts.
5. What are the characteristics of rural church life in the South? Can once-a-month churches spiritualize the twentieth-century rural South? Tell of the good many of these churches have done.
6. About how many Baptist and Methodist rural churches are closed from preaching on an average Sunday? How many are open? What kind of sermons does the once-a-month preacher usually preach? Give an illustration pointing to the fact that some of these churches are already decaying.
7. Is a once-a-month preacher usually really a pastor? Show why he cannot well be truly a pastor. Tell of the round of human experience in a church community which he seldom touches. Have the majority of rural churches of the South had real pastoral care? Show how the automobile is teaching absentee preachers a lesson.
8. Tell of the brief average pastoral tenure in country churches and show what effect this has on the pastoral relation. Give the situation in Salt River Association in this regard.
9. Tell of prosperous country preachers who give two-sevenths of their lives to the churches and five-sevenths to their farms. Is such a preacher worth a living salary?
10. Show how converts in once-a-month churches settle down in to the soporific slowness of the church environment. Quote Dr. E. C. Routh on this evil.
11. Do once-a-month churches generally co-operate in denominational work? Why do they fail so much at this point? Can we reach them if we will actually understand their needs and help them? What does Dr. F. C. McConnell say on this point?
12. What is the relative importance of the country church among rural uplift forces? What is the pastor's proper

relation to the life of the community? Tell of Oberlin's activities.

13. Tell of exceptions to the rules advocated. Tell how some leaders unconsciously help to perpetuate the absentee pastoral system.
14. What did Pastor Littlejohn find at Red Hill Church in South Carolina? What did he do?
15. Show how his devotion blessed him and his family, as well as his churches.
16. Tell of Dr. P. H. Mell's long rural pastorate in Georgia. What did he think of the once-a-month system?
17. Tell of the advantage of forming fields among contiguous churches. Is it easy to get Baptist churches to sacrifice their "liberty" for the welfare of the cause? Is it right for a preacher to take a church, if doing so will prevent forming a field? What does Dr. C. L. Greaves say on this?
18. Give some advantages of twice-a-month preaching. What suggestion is given by which some churches could accomplish this advance?
19. How many rural parsonages have Southern Baptists? Tell of some advantages of such parsonages. What adventure in co-operative ownership is suggested?
20. Give two reasons Southern rural churches have endured under the once-a-month practice, while Northern and Middle West rural churches, many of which met oftener, have died? What lesson is there in this for us?
21. Give what is said about the cruciality of the once-a-month practice. Can Southern Baptists continue to ignore the danger and weakness of this system without lowering their standing as a Christian body?

CHAPTER VII.

THE SUPPORT OF THE PASTOR.

1. An arraignment. It is difficult to give sustained consideration to the subject of pastoral support without coming to the conclusion that its parsimoniousness is one of the baldest sins of American Christianity. The Religious Census, of 1906, affirms that the average salary paid an evangelical minister in America is $663. The Census gives too small an average for Southern Baptists, as is shown elsewhere, but, even after making the correction, Southern Baptists stand at the foot of the class of the large white Christian bodies in ministerial support. With an average pastoral wage for all denominations which is less than that of a brickmason, Southern Baptist churches have won for themselves the pitiful distinction of paying an average wage which is not much more than a capable field laborer now earns. The cost of living has advanced much, and is, at this writing, going higher. But the preacher's salary shows a chronic disinclination to go upward, at which spectacle the profane may sneer. Preachers produce real values. They make social stability, and that makes increased property values. Their work makes men sober and industrious and that makes more production. It makes men moral and righteous, and that cuts down the cost of courts and prisons. A railway official said a revival of six weeks among the employees of his system was worth $100,000 to the road. The sneer that preachers are poor business men entirely misses the mark. As well flout a bank president for being

a poor poet, or a merchant for being a poor engineer. Says a writer in the Atlantic Monthly: "Men are proud of being just and fair where it is an economic necessity; they are brutally callous where it is a religious grace. The employer who dares not drive a gray-haired mechanic from his lathe and throw him on the mercy of the community, will tear a faithful but gray-haired preacher from his pulpit and drop him upon the lean cold bosom of charity." If there is anything in the practice of American religious bodies which may fairly be called despicable, it is the stingy treatment they accord their preachers. Their niggardly support of the ministry is their shame. What words would properly characterize the callous heartlessness with which they turn their worn-out preachers out to an almost frozen charity!

2. **The salaries are insufficient.** An inadequate wage for the pastor is largely but the other side of the once-a-month practice of rural churches. This makeshift custom has been perpetrated by the unwillingness of the churches to pay for more service. For one Sunday in the month a church can employ a preacher at a wage of one-fourth what it requires to help him eke out a bare existence. There was a time when $100 or $150 from each of four churches for monthly pulpit service was sufficient to provide a modest support for a frugal pastor's family. But this amount is entirely and hopelessly insufficient now that the cost of living and the requirements made of preachers have so greatly increased. And yet there is an apparently chronic tardiness on the part of the large majority of country churches to pay larger salaries. If in the Judgment church members should be held to account for withholding their reasonable contributions to the men who ministered

to them in spiritual things, there would be general consternation, and if it was suggested that unredeemed pledges to pastors' salaries be made good, the distress would become acute. The great outstanding reproach of the average country church is the niggardly support which it doles out to its pastor.

3. Baptists the greatest offenders. The evil of niggardly support for country preachers is common to all Christian bodies in America, but Southern Baptists have the unenviable distinction of being the worst offenders among all the larger denominations. The Religious Census of 1906 (page 95) sets forth that the average salary paid white Baptist preachers in the South, outside of cities of more than 25,000, was $334, while that of the Methodists was $681 and the Presbyterians $857. Unwilling to accept these figures, unless compelled to do so, the author compared the number of ministers on which the accusatory average was figured, with the dependable list of Baptist pastors by Dr. Lansing Burrows in our Convention minutes for that year and found that there were 2,003 fewer pastors than the Government Census had given us. This brought the average salary for our preachers up to $473, and we are entitled to all the satisfaction we can get out of that. A survey in 1913 by the Home Mission Board of 5,400 once-a-month churches showed an average among these of $378 salary for each four churches. The pastoral support in the churches meeting monthly varies greatly in different sections. In the most prosperous Associations it averages about $150 per church, while in the weakest it is lower than $30 per church. In the most prosperous sections it is less than the minimum salary of a pastor should be, while in the weakest it is a pitiful stipend indeed, impossible for a pastor to get along

with, except as he makes his living at other work and then gives what time he can spare to the churches.

4. "A free gospel." Perhaps no other pioneer tradition of our churches has been so tenacious as that preachers ought to preach the gospel without salary or assured support. The student of the history of Baptist churches in the South knows it is true that this section was largely evangelized and brought into Baptist churches by preachers who provided nearly all their own support. The reaction from the support by taxation of the Established Church made a stated salary hateful to many of those early Baptists. They believed in a free gospel and in the support of the ministry by free will offerings—which they usually forget to give. So patent a perversion of Scripture principle could not have lived so long among a people who honestly desire to obey the Bible, had it not been aided by that covetousness which tends to cripple Christians in every age and also by an unfortunate timidity of the preachers, which led them to shrink from declaring that the ox that treadeth out the corn is not to be muzzled, that they who preach the gospel shall live by the gospel, and that a man who ministers to human souls and enlarges men's personalities is certainly as worthy of a fair compensation as he who builds a house or tills a field. But it did live and in many places is living yet. Even now the back-country is beset by religious charletans who capitalize the covetous prejudices of the ignorant by posing that they labor without salary and implying or asserting that the preachers, who have stayed with the people and whom they have shamefully neglected, are preaching for the pitifully shrunken loaves and fishes which they dole out to them. By such methods one of these unscrupulous peripatetics beguiles dollars from ignorant people who deny even

a pittance to support honest and faithful preachers. This is one of the treacherous and demagoguic expedients of Russellism.

5. Infects more intelligent churches. If this discreditable niggardliness was confined to the ignorant in remote communities, the task of remedying it would be comparatively simple. The needs of such people we are perhaps usually willing to include in our restricted definition of missions, and once we come to take hold of it as a large mission problem, (which we have not yet done) Baptists will have tact enough to know how to win them from their narrow gospel of suspicion, emotion, and negation. But the germs of parsimonious support for preachers have contaminated the spiritual health of churches in thousands of more intelligent communities. The average country church whose members pay $250 a year for the labor of a Negro farmhand, all together are managing to dole out only $150 a year for once-a-month preaching by an absentee preacher. It is said some of them even desire the pastor to pay the honorarium of the minister who preaches in the summer revival. This is the entire sacrifice of the community to maintain the influence and teaching of the church of Christ for the people and for their own children. Some readers will be ready with arguments on the other side. The author is aware of those arguments. But let us for the present hold to this one. It is tremendously big, and not all the reasons which can be marshalled against it can take away its crushing force. The tight-wad members of the great mass of our country churches simply must be lifted out of their narrow views of the church's functions and of the preacher's support. If it was in other respects possible to save the country church and induct it into an en-

larged life and service, while we left these tight-wad members joined to their parsimonious practice, the effort would still be a failure, in that these members make up the church and there can be no enlargement which does not include them and give them a heart to sacrifice for the church.

6. The lack of instruction. Though I have elsewhere presented a view of the preachers' responsibility for the sad state of many of our rural churches, and must now cling to the subject of the obligation which rests upon the churches, it seems fit to say definitely that the preachers have also been responsible for the lack of conscience in the churches for the support of the pastors. They have not preached on the duty of the church to support its pastor. Dr. S. Y. Jameson, when he was Secretary of Missions in Georgia, once openly catechised a church on this point. "Deacon," he said, "does your pastor fearlessly preach to you the whole word of God?" "He certainly does," replied the deacon. "Well, deacon, has he in the five years he has served this church ever instructed you in what the Bible teaches on the duty of the church to support its pastor?" The church was electrified into awareness, the pastor looked timid, and the deacon was ill at ease. He had to reply that his pastor had not told them what God's word teaches on supporting the minister. Had the deacon known it, his pastor had not been more remiss than perhaps forty-nine out of every fifty are. The veriest ministerial novice is aware how suspicious and selfish persons can misconstrue such a sermon into a plea for his own material welfare, but this does not justify the almost universal neglect of our preachers to teach the churches their duty in this respect. A preacher ought to have moral manhood enough to preach that truth which covetous and sinister spirits can turn

against him with the thoughtless, as well as other truth. If he will speak faithfully and tactfully, he will find that the moral and spiritual strength of his people will respond.

7. Great souls who have served and suffered. Only heaven will reveal how many great souls have given their earthly service to the poorly paid work of the rural pastorate. Each of us remembers some such. On Sunday morning the author had been at Healing Springs Church in lower South Carolina with his venerable friend, Dr. W. D. Rice, who was a graduate of Brown University and for years President of the South Carolina Baptist State Convention, but who was through most of his life a country pastor, accepting the meagre stipend as a part support and living mainly from the income of his inherited estate. That afternoon we journeyed to a school house at the little railway station to join Dr. John G. Williams, who had preached at Double Branch Church that forenoon. After Dr. Williams had delivered a strong sermon before the school house assembly, the three of us went to a hospitable near-by home for the night. Dr. Williams was also ripe in years, a man of fine attainments and of great intellect and personality. His life had been spent as a country pastor in the picturesque region in which we were stopping. After an evening spent in a rare fellowship, in which the people from the neighboring homes participated, we were left to ourselves and the conversation became intimate. Dr. Rice asked Dr. Williams why his brilliant son, James, who had gone to Brown University to study for the ministry, had changed from his purpose and became an attorney. Both of those great-souled men have now gone to their reward. It is only in the belief that they would approve of the purpose here in view that the writer repeats what that grand old man said

that October Sunday night, weary from preaching and talking all day and driving by cotton fields and through swamps and pine forests.

8. Why James changed to law. His voice broke and the glistening dew trembled in his fine eyes. He said that it had nearly broken his heart when James had written him he had decided to turn lawyer. But James had told him his reasons and stood firm in his decision. He had written something like this: "Father, I am willing to be poor for Christ's sake. It makes me unhappy to disappoint you. I would not merely for financial advantage forsake my purpose to preach. But, father, I know that you are a good man and an able man, and when I see how the churches through all the years have taken and used the powers of your great heart and personality, and how they have through all that time kept you near the border of actual poverty and want, I do not find it in my heart not to resent the way they have treated you, and I am not willing, who am not half your equal, to put myself into a calling where the best I could do would be met by the neglect of even my simplest physical needs." After he had finished, we sat awhile in silence. Then his old friend gently asked him how he felt now about his boy's decision. He replied that when he thought of the persistent niggardliness of the churches in their attitude to the ministry, he found himself becoming reconciled to it. The author has never been privileged to know two more charming and lovable Christian gentlemen than those two old veterans, country preachers through many years, who communed together that October Sunday night on the piazza of a modest rural home, while the chirp of crickets came from the darkness without. The father who thus spoke loved the people and the

churches loved him. There are no more kindly or hospitable people in the whole nation than they. This same section produced Robert J. Willingham, C. C. Brown, and other rare spirits. They would not willingly do any man harm. But even these churches, possessed of charming social graces and enjoying the blessing of the ministry of rare and great men, did not give them a decent support for their work, and indirectly drove from the ministry a gifted young man, who resented the injustice our penurious Baptist church neglect heaped upon his father. It is not difficult to criticise the young man, but what church is worthy to do so which has been guilty of withholding a support from the men who give their lives to preaching to and serving them?

9. Injustice borne by preachers. Not only do the country churches usually promise the most pitifully meagre pay they can hope to get a preacher for; many of them have little conscience about paying what they promise. The smallness of the salary makes it the more necessary that the minister shall be paid promptly, but in many sections the custom is to wait about paying him till the fall, when crops are sold. Well-to-do farmers, who buy economically by paying cash, sometimes leave their pastors to the uncertain mercies of the "time prices" of tradesmen. One pastor writes: "I have seven children and a salary of $700. Last year crops were poor and I got $555. This year prospects are worse. I have an offer to go on the road as a salesman at $112 monthly and expenses, but will refuse it. I preach three times each Sunday and walk an average of thirty miles." Another preacher was promised $600, but got only $340. He has a wife and two children. He raised $500 to buy lumber to repair the church. The deacons offered to pay him $2.50 per day as a carpenter, but as a

preacher they considered him worth only one dollar per day. He worked eighty-three days and the local paper says improved the church $1,000 worth. But at last accounts they had paid only $5 of the $207 due him for carpentry. By such actions some country churches are bringing upon themselves the loss of their self-support and of their influence in the community, are effectually shutting themselves out from the favor and blessing of God, and almost breaking the hearts of their pastors. They are also by their injustice to the men who preach to them creating an atmosphere out of which we cannot expect God to call young men into the ministry.

10. A comparison in wages. There is an influential though relatively small group of country churches which do not treat the pastor's salary with neglect, but cheerfully provide for his support. There are some such churches or groups of churches in most of the States in the South. They pay the pastor $1,000 or more and possibly furnish him with a parsonage. But, glad as the author is to note these exceptions and to look upon them as harbingers of a better day, he must yet seek faithfully to portray with something of its real force the chronic inertia which through generations the great mass of our rural churches have manifested toward the duty of honestly seeking to support the men who give their lives to preaching to them. Averages do not tell the whole story, but they may yet be profoundly significant. The average country Baptist preacher's salary in the South to-day is not so much as $500. Street car conductors and motorman in Atlanta get $700 to $900. Railway conductors and engineers are paid from $1600 to $2100; railway mail clerks get from $900 to $1500; brick masons and carpenters from $2.50 to $5.00 per day; many

cotton mill operatives make $400 and $500 a year; responsible clerks in stores are paid from $500 to $3000; stenographers from $500 to $1200. None of these workers gets more than he earns. But a country church in a prosperous community usually feels that it is doing pretty well if it pays $150 for a minister to serve the spiritual interests of the people, and it is well above the average if it pays $200 for a once-a-month preaching service. Much may be said to explain why these churches are doing so poorly in the support of the gospel, but nothing can disguise the fact that it is a discreditable and even shameful situation. It does not represent fairly the religious conviction or the character and worth of the rural church people in the South, and they must free themselves from it in justice to themselves and because they can never serve the spiritual needs of the rural life of our day until they do so.

11. A study in automobiles. This niggardly support of their pastors is the standing shame of our country churches. The wealth of farming interests has increased amazingly. There is money for material improvement, for expensive farm machinery, for education, for amusement, automobiles, more land, or what not. But the highest cause of all still receives little more than the traditional dole which belongs to the period of homespun and trade by barter. Farmers who ride in $700 automobiles, send their sons and daughters to $400 and $500 schools, and every few years buy up more $60-an-acre land, are content to join with all their neighbors in making up a tardy total of $150 a year to maintain the instruction and ministries of the church of Christ for themselves and their children! In a country church with monthly preaching by an absentee preacher whom they pay $200 a year, five members bought expensive

automobiles last year. If they would add to the pastor's salary an amount equal to the probable cost of gasoline and tire replacements, it would make a salary of $700, and would arouse the other members so that the amount could without difficulty be increased to $1,000 for full-time preaching by a resident pastor. Yet this occurrence is duplicated yearly in hundreds of country churches, which still drag along in their parsimonious and ruinous once-a-month custom, perhaps wondering why the preachers are not more able and why religion is losing its hold on men!

12. Great rural wealth. Mr. Richard H. Edmonds, of Baltimore, editor of the Manufacturers' Record, is authority for the statement that during the ten years ending in 1912 the value of farm lands and farm buildings in the South increased $4,900,000,000. If the country people would pay yearly to maintaining the churches one percent of this increase only, it would provide 20,000 preachers with a salary of $1,500 each and leave $19,000,000 for improving church buildings and other religious effort. It is estimated that more than $2,000,000,000 is now invested in automobiles in this country and that $700,000,000 more will be spent for these machines in 1917. The South probably uses more than one-fifth of the automobiles. But if it uses only this number, we have $400,000,000 invested and in 1917 will invest $140,000,000 more in automobiles. One-half of the machines are perhaps owned by country people. That is, in the rural South $200,000,000 worth of automobiles are owned, and $70,000,000 more will be spent for them within a year. An average of almost fifty percent of the rural religious membership is in Baptist churches, and they own a large proportion of these machines. The gasoline and upkeep of an automobile will average not less than

$100 a year. Their average value is by authorities placed at $700. If the members of our rural churches use one-fourth of the automobiles, they will spend next year in the up-keep of a machine which most of them had hardly heard of fifteen years ago, the amount of $9,600,000, while they provide for the 5,000 preachers who serve 20,000 country churches a total salary of not more than $2,500,000. Yet the salvation of souls and lives and the building of personality and character are to be secured through the institutions of religion, and not through the rapidity with which men go from one place to another! Like the other inventions which are transforming country life, the automobile is both good and bad; good for those who have the moral strength to dominate material possessions; bad for the weak who use each added comfort and pleasure as a means whereby they may speed away from responsibility and religious and social accountability.

13. Bricks without straw. There are those who will say, "Give us better preachers, and we will support them better." It could be replied that there is no material out of which to make preachers except laymen, no sufficient guarantee against ordaining unfit men except spiritual-mindedness and care on the part of the churches which ordain them, and no authority sufficient to urge these men to educate themselves, unless the churches insist upon knowing whether the candidate is willing to do everything possible to prepare himself for his difficult work, before they ordain him. There is some truth on both sides. To insist on one to the exclusion of the other is to fail. This partial approach has too long exhausted our energies, so that we relapsed into inertia and did nothing to correct the crying reproach of trying to save and hold the South for Christ by poorly-paid, once-a-month

preachers. It is surely time we should try to get beyond the stage of grumbling when some one seeks to awaken us, and then turning over and going to sleep again! Preachers who have a passion for service which will lead forward undeterred when they are required to make bricks without straw, are essential to the spiritual weal of every age. Country churches in the South have enjoyed the services and used up the life forces of an exceptionally large and meritorious group of such men, and are still doing so. One of the most discouraging evidences that their labors have not fruited in the large way such sacrificial service merits, is that the churches are querulously crying out for more good men to serve them, though they have often shamefully neglected to supply even the physical needs of the preachers who have gone before. We shall not be able to remedy the general neglect among the churches in supporting their preachers without a sacrificial spirit on the part of the ministers. We must insist on a high missionary consecration for the preachers who must do the work in many retarded places. But we must also seek to bring our rural churches into a realization that in almost every section they are habitually doing both an unethical and unwise thing in a close-fistedness in ministerial support which increased wealth so far has led few of them to remedy.

14. Bricks and Straw. I do not forget that it is equally incumbent upon the pastors to show the churches that there is a service to be rendered which is really worthy of a living support. The preacher must be a man of vision and of power to impart his vision to others. He must have a consecration which shall lead him to throw himself into the breach, though he cannot be assured of a support. The men who will accomplish most in the country ministry

will take up the task of making bricks without straw as the best means of coming to a time when they shall have straw wherewith to make the bricks. Preachers who on country fields will really give their lives to developing the churches and serving the spiritual needs of the people will usually elicit from the churches a modest support. The initial sacrifice must nearly always be made by the preacher, for the churches need patiently to be shown the value of adequate, loving service before they will usually give liberally to support it. This may be bad business, but it has in it the efficiency of the Lord.

15. Must sweep before its own door. But the responsibility of the churches must be kept to the front. It will be fatal for many of them, if they persist in complaining at conditions—at the declining religious interest and at the preachers—instead of asking God to help them to see their own infirmities. Where rural religious life is declining, it is probably largely because the church itself lets its light shine only fitfully and uncertainly, instead of keeping it trimmed and burning. The preacher wants a better salary because, cure of souls though he is, he and those dependent upon him must have clothes and food and shelter for the fleshly body in which they tabernacle. They cannot pay house rent and buy books and educate the children by the barter of souls. Preachers do not "preach for money." With thousands of Southern Baptist preachers eking out a support by some other work than their ministry, this perverse slogan of narrow-souled church members is discreditable and almost a tragedy. A country church in England once offered Mr. Spurgeon such a small salary, when he had yet not become famous, that Spurgeon wrote the trustees: "The only individual I know who could exist on such a stipend is the

angel Gabriel. He would need neither cash nor clothes, and he would come down from heaven every Sunday morning and go back at night. So I advise you to invite him." Mr. Richard H. Edmonds, in the article from which I have quoted, says: "Some may say that to demand that the rural churches shall pay better salaries, is putting the cart before the horse. This is a mistake. A farmer who wants his field to produce better crops and more profit, first puts out the money necessary for manure and labor. If he waited for his field to develop self-fertility before putting in the labor and money, he would never get any larger crops."

16. Must support preachers now at work. Five thousand Baptist preachers, though every one of them was capable and devoted, and though they all had a living support, could never do the work that needs doing to vitalize the Baptist churches in 20,000 villages and rural communities in the South. But neither can we hope that it will ever be done in any other way until the churches are brought to show a more just and practical appreciation of the men who now serve them. If there is not an element among our country preachers to-day who are weaker in personal force than their predecessors of a generation ago, it is not the fault of the churches. Failing to go forward in spiritual things as their members went forward in material things, they in effect advertised for under-shepherds of weaker personality by their own be-littling of the religious element in life. The great body of our rural preachers are still men of vision, of holy idealism and of personality. At a former time in religious newspaper service I spent much of my time with hundreds of these men in their churches and homes and among their people. At no period or place have I ever had such a sense of the worth-whileness of the

work of the ministry and of the sweetness of the fellowship of the saints, as I had in those years of unpretentious service by the side of these unpretentious men of God, whose one great joy in life was to give themselves for others. The first thing the churches must do to secure better pastoral service is to give a better support to the pastors they now have. There have been very few country preachers who did not need a better support and who would not have been able to render better service if they had been better paid. But in the South there are thousands who are seriously crippled and handicapped in their holy service by the necessity of giving much thought and effort to making a living in other pursuits.

17. Creating a need for more preachers. One of the first results of better support for the preachers would be a lessening of the number of churches with only monthly preaching. As rapidly as the pastor should locate near and serve only two or three churches, there would be created a lack of preachers for some of the once-a-month churches. In one sense this would be a blessing. When our churches consciously feel the need they will revive that holy practice, far too much neglected, of praying the Lord to send forth more laborers into the harvest. Also it would arouse our leaders, our colleges and theological seminaries, to the situation—all of which need arousing. We shall have a long road to travel before we may hope to reconstruct the country church usage of the South so that it shall competently serve the needs of our present civilization, and it is not necessary that this volume should undertake to point out the way to meet a crisis which may grow acute twenty years from now. The author will be overjoyed if these chapters may only help to bring our Baptist people to grapple with

those phases of the problem which now stand out before us. With many tons of encrusted inertia to roll from the door before we can enter this great Mammoth Cave of opportunity, we need not yet trouble ourselves much about how we shall navigate Echo River, far away in the labyrinthine midnight. We must grapple the stone at the door.

18. A wrong use of the past. Elsewhere attention is given to the duty of various agencies in our spiritual body to press the call of the country on our young preachers and of young preachers to give fair consideration to this call. We shall not be able to meet the needs of rural Christendon without a determined emphasis of this kind. But the other half of the sphere is the necessity of our country churches arousing themselves from their languid dream of an "old time religion," in which they unconsciously misrepresent the faith of the pioneer fathers by making them responsible for their own indolent complacency. If the pioneer fathers had been made of such stuff, the rude wilderness of frontier sin would never have been tamed into the orderly community life of a Christian civilization. The rural churches of the South do not need an "old time religion." Our spiritual sires did not have it; they had the religion of Jesus and applied it to their own day. We must have the religion of Jesus and apply it to our day. It will be a far better spiritual exercise to give a fair and honest support to the pastor, than to dream and sing about a heaven of inertia, falsely attributed to our spiritual sires, while we let the pastor and his family almost starve. Baptists should be second to none in appreciation of their spiritual forebears, but if they were of the kind who spend dollars and hundreds of dollars on themselves, while they dole out reluctant nickels

and dimes for God and the support of the gospel, it would be to our credit to desire to be unlike them.

19. Explaining tardiness in church support. The Southern farmer is not more likely to be covetous than other men. His home still affords the best specimen of that wholehearted hospitality which has made the South famous. It may hurt him to give $5 a year to the preacher, but he will applaud his wife when she puts more than twice that value in food on the table to entertain the visitor. The farmer has been so much of an individualist that even in his church he touches co-operative action gingerly and either waits for others to shoulder the load of financial support, or at best nearly always refuses to try to lead others into larger efforts. Many a country church fails for lack of a single man who will do capably the one thing the pastor feels that he cannot do—get the minister's salary subscribed and paid. The business man will often handle thousands and yet be thankful if he can close the year even. The farmer will handle a relatively small amount in cash. But his living comes largely from his products, he pays no house rent, and he saves the lesser amount of cash with great care. He has gathered his wealth largely by holding on to what he got. He has in recent years expanded on the material side of his nature. He buys improved farm machinery, begins to put modern conveniences into his home, and rides in an automobile. But on the spiritual side of his nature, and perhaps the educational side, his saving habit still persists. On the material side he has gotten out of the ruts and thinks in dollars and hundreds or thousands of dollars. But on the spiritual side he is still thinking in nickels and dimes, and often seems to believe religion is a nickel and dime business to be fostered chiefly by women. The rural church cannot

make any great advance until these men learn to think with the spiritual side of their heads in the same broad way they now think on the material side. As long as they join field on to field by purchase and ride in their automobiles, while their absentee preacher has difficulty of getting the wherewithal to pay house rent and the grocery bill, it will be no wonder if the unsaved in the community think there is nothing in religion, and the converts who are brought into the church think they have done all, instead of only the first act of a Christian life.

20. An appeal to farmers. The farmer has been slow to see that it requires more cash to enable his preacher to maintain his family in modest comfort than it does for the average farmer. The farmer has his home without cost, while the preacher will pay usually $180 a year or more for a modest cottage. The farmer's table may be supplied mainly from the farm and garden; the preacher's grocery bills will go to $300 or more. The farmer's team is part of the farm outfit, and his horse is fed from his fields; the preacher's team is for the church's service and its upkeep and the horse feed will cost more than $100 yearly. So that the preacher's living costs amount to $580, before he gets to the point where the farmer's begins. If the farmer needs $500 in cash to provide the necessaries for the living of his family, the preacher needs $1,080. This fact has been elucidated often, but is here set forth again. Farmers are fair-minded men, and certainly the responsible leaders in our country churches want to know the truth and do justly by their preachers. On this plane I appeal. If the preacher is willing, for the sake of giving his life to a holy and unselfish service, to forego all prospect of laying up a competency for his declining years, a worthy ambition which

his parishioners do not sacrifice, and if he is willing for the sake of the good he hopes to do to put himself in a position in which the most narrow-souled and ungenerous will feel free to fire at him their criticisms, can a generous-minded farmer afford to do less than demand for his pastor just treatment and a fair support? If he is willing to spend years in the expensive business of educating himself for a life-work in which he knows his worldly compensation will not be more than a frugal support—years in which other men are laying the foundations of business success—can the churches afford to do less than see to it that he at least shall be relieved of the necessity of providing part of his own support by other than ministerial work? It will be said that some of them do not prepare for their work and some will think that they ought to work half the time at something else for a support. It is a fact that some have not really tried to prepare for this high calling, and here the preachers and the churches which ordained them have sinned together. We cannot hope to build up the churches with preachers who are unwilling to do all they can to educate themselves in the schools and all they can to improve themselves by reading. A ministry which shall be capable of leading the churches in our new rural life conditions must give all of its time to reading, prayer, pastoral work, and preaching. The churches must demand this, but they cannot do it so long as they shirk their own obligation to support their pastors.

21. Financial plan needed. Almost absolute lack of a financial plan for church support has been the rule among our country churches. Sometimes at a church conference the brethren are asked to say what they will give to the support of the pastor; perhaps oftener some earnest mem-

ber, unprovided with a plan, but realizing that something must be done, canvasses the members as they come on the church grounds on Sunday morning. This canvass seldom reaches all the members or undertakes to reach any in the family except the father and husband. It is perhaps usually made with the understanding that it may not be called for till next fall, and sometimes it is conditioned upon the success of financial plans or of the next crop. In general there is no sustained and serious effort to put it upon each member of the church that he should prayerfully consider what definite amount he will undertake to contribute regularly during the year for the purpose of maintaining the influence and service of the church in the community. In many churches not even this much is done; it is all left to chance. The Enlistment Workers of the Home Mission Board have worked out into successful practice a plan for an every-member canvass of the church. The name and address of each of these Workers, as constituted in 1916, is given in Appendix D. Any one of them will be glad to give information about, or in his own State lend aid in conducting such a canvass. The heart of the plan is for a capable worker first to put it on the hearts of the church members, second to visit each member and get from him a definite pledge for a weekly or monthly contribution. These canvasses have regularly doubled or quadrupled church support.

22. Minimum salaries. In some sections Northern Methodists have with good results adopted a minimum salary of $750 for pastors. There is also a maximum salary of $3,000. It was thought preachers in the larger city pastorates would object to the plan, which called for their churches to pay as much to help support the weaker churches as the pastor's salary should exceed $3,000. On

the contrary, they adopted the plan gladly, with a new sense of fellowship with their brothers on poorer fields. Moreover, spurred thus to consider their neglect of their preachers, many of the fields which had paid less, not only raised the minimum required, but went beyond it. This suggests that one reason the churches have given so little attention to a suitable support for their pastors is that the leadership of the religious body with which they are connected, as well as their own pastors, maintain toward the subject an attitude of aloofness which may appear to be indifference. A search by the author has revealed the fact that the minutes of only a few of our State Baptist bodies in the South record the pastors' salaries in the statistical tables. The General Convention minutes have no such record. It would require more uncompensated work for the secretary, but it ought to be done. The question is here raised as to whether it is practicable for our State Mission Boards to adopt a minimum salary for such fields as they shall aid in pastoral support, the Home Mission Board, of course, adjusting its help to the requirements. Secretary W. T. Derieux, of South Carolina, has adopted a requirement that churches expecting aid must form compact fields, or show that they have done all possible to that end, also that they must as far as possible secure pastors who will live among the churches, and not afar in some town or city. Virginia has had a similar requirement. This is a good beginning. If the State Boards would name a minimum salary of $900 or $1,000 without a home for the pastor, or $200 less when the home is provided, it would unquestionably do much to make churches consider their poor record in pastoral support and lead many to mend their ways.

23. Better things shall be. The country churches of

the South must do better in pastoral support, and it is believed they will. It is an essential step in equipping themselves to serve the rural civilization of today, and toward sending out to the world that sustained overflow of blessing which in the nature of things the country must be expected to produce for the nation and for Christ. Most of our churches are well able to double the salaries they pay. Many of them can quadruple the salaries, and ought to do so. The preachers will in proportion render a better service, and the unsaved in country communities will find themselves again drawn to the church, for which they have been losing respect. With such a support the parents will find their own children drawn toward the church, which is losing its grip on them. Infrequent preaching, sometimes not edifying, and their observation that their parents dole dimes to religion, while they spend hundreds of dollars for pleasure and comfort, are leading thousands of young people to neglect the church.

24. Vision of a better day. It is impossible for the country churches of the South to undo the wrong they have done their preachers in getting their service often for the least dollar possible, often in withholding even that amount, until the preacher was harassed by debts, and sometimes in not paying the salary at all. Nor can they undo the cruel injustice of turning these half-supported men adrift when they were no longer young, when they could not possibly make a living any other way. They cannot escape the reproach of having taken advantage of the fact that these men were preachers to grind down their support, and make them provide spiritual things for the communities at their own costs. Yet it was done ignorantly in unbelief, and not with a deliberate purpose to misuse the men who ministered

to them in the best and highest values of life. Is there not in the Baptist country churches of the South a spirit which is ready to humble itself before God and confess this evil and then forsake it? Assuredly there is. I have a vision of a day in which the average salary of our country preachers shall be not less than $1,500 and the minimum salary $1,000. When that day comes most of our churches will have a pastor in or near the community who shall give his life to serving the sheep of the flock, and three-fourths of the churches will be open for preaching services at least twice a month. In that day the country community will have had a new birth. The capable preacher will lead in ministering to the community life, and the young men and women when they return from the colleges will want to stay on the farms and will only leave when there is a call elsewhere really worth leaving for. And in that day Mission Boards will no longer need to keep up their periodic high-wrought appeals, for streams of money shall come into their coffers from the taught and trained rural churches throughout the South. It may be this day shall be fifteen years, twenty years, thirty years, fifty years coming. That depends, for it is to be not the child of a dream, but the result of an aroused and awakened denomination—from seminaries and colleges and newspapers and Boards, to the littlest church of them all, builded by an humble band of worshippers in the quietest nook of the remotest community. God grant and God speed that day! Shall we not in our own time labor for its coming?

TEST QUESTIONS OF CHAPTER VII.

1. What is the average preacher's wage in America? How do Baptists stand on this? Does the preacher's salary in-

crease with the cost of living? Show how preachers produce real values. Give what is said about their being bad business men. Quote a writer in Atlantic Monthly. What terms properly characterize this treatment of preachers?

2. Tell how the inadequate support of pastors has come about. Describe the chronic tardiness toward adequate support.
3. Show how Baptists stand as compared with others in pastoral support. Give the result of a Home Board survey of once-a-month churches.
4. Tell of pastoral support in pioneer churches; of the prejudice created by Established Church taxation to support preachers; of the reluctance of preachers to teach the truth on this point; of religious charletans who still capitalize the coveteousness of backward people.
5. Does inadequate support infest more intelligent churches? Compare the wage of a Negro farm hand and the support of the gospel by the average once-a-month church. Can country churches escape the responsibility for this situation? Is it possible to enlarge and redirect the country church while it refuses to pay the pastor more than the smallest possible amount?
6. Tell of failure of the preacher to instruct the churches on their duty in this respect. Give the story of Dr. Jameson catechising a country church on this point. Show why preachers fail to perform this duty.
7. Give the story of Drs. W. D. Rice and John G. Williams.
8. Give the story of why James Williams left the ministry for law. Is a church which withholds a support from its pastor worthy to criticise him?
9. Show how churches heap injustice on the preachers in regard to their support. Give two instances of shameful neglect of pastors.
10. Tell of the group of rural churches who do not neglect pastoral support. Give comparative wages of country pastors and of various other workers. (If the student will include from his own knowledge still other cases, all the better.)

11. Tell of money spent for automobiles and other luxuries by modern farmers. Give illustration of automobile purchases in the membership of a once-a-month church.
12. Give Mr. Edmonds' estimate of increased value of Southern farms in ten years. Show what one percent of this increase would do in the support of ministers. Tell of money spent for automobiles in America and in the South. Tell of cost of upkeep. Tell of minimum probable automobile costs to country Baptists and compare it with what they pay 5,000 preachers.
13. Give one big reason we have no better preachers than we have. Tell of the unfruitfulness of never getting beyond partial statements of the truth about pastoral support. Must we have preachers wiling to make bricks without straw?
14. Is it equally essential to have churches which will furnish straw for the bricks? Does a preacher who ventures all have a good chance to get a support? Does a church that will pay a support have an equally good chance to get a good preacher, or make a better one out of its pastor?
15. Tell about why a church should sweep before its own door. Show how failure to do so causes them leanness of soul. Why do preachers want a living salary? Is it a reproach to them? Give the story of Spurgeon's reply to a stingy church. Quote Mr. Edmunds on pastoral support.
16. Show how essential to more and better preachers it is for churches to support those they have. Recount story of the author about the worth of our rural preachers.
17. Show how more preaching in the churches would create a dearth of preachers. Show how this might cure itself. Show why we need not yet cross this bridge.
18. Show that the languid idealization of an "old time religion" has caused many rural churches to misrepresent the religion of the American pioneers, and deceive themselves into a false security.
19. Show that farmers are not more covetous than other people. Explain reasons why farmers as a class are more given to to close saving than business men. Show how they now

think in spiritual dimes and business thousands. Will God bless a people who do this?

20. Show the difference in cash cost of living for an average farmer and an average rural preacher. Show that a square deal requires that the farmer become aggressive in demanding of his church a better support for the pastor. Show the part adequate preacher-training plays in this composite.
21. Describe the lax financial practice of the average rural church. Tell what the Enlistment Workers have done to improve the financial methods.
22. Give Northern Methodist experience in minimum and maximum salaries. Do our State and Southern Convention minutes show pastors' salaries? Tell of new requirements of South Carolina State Mission Board. What is said about a minimum salary for Baptist churches?
23. Tell of the ability of country churches to pay better salaries.
24. Show what injustice to pastors rural churches can do, and recount the vision of better things in pastoral support.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOR A BETTER DAY.

1. Diagnosis and prescription. The purpose of this volume is to affirm that the patient is sick, rather than to prescribe a course of treatment. Though the subject matter affects directly the welfare of three-fourths of our Baptist churches and intimately concerns all the rest, it is beyond the fairest hope of the author that we shall soon part company with the static once-a-month church and the half-supported country preacher. He shall be satisfied if the leadership of the denomination takes to heart the diagnosis that the patient is suffering from a chronic ailment, and that he is not only abundantly worth saving, but must be restored to health. The majority of our rural churches have remained static in a dynamic material civilization. Sooner or later, each such church must reach the point where it cannot possibly longer stand still, but will either be driven to advance, or, by standing still, will sink through apathy into death. These chapters are intended to be a challenge to the idealism and serious purpose of the denomination to take hold of this voiceless and pathetic problem. It is a plea to forward-looking and upward-striving men and women of our spiritual body to put their shoulders to the wheel of this great Baptist wagon, which by our leadership has been deserted for other vehicles so long that its wheels have become sunken to the axles in the quagmire of outworn tradition. If the diagnosis shall convince our ministers, denominational workers, and other leaders that the vitality and

usefulness of the churches are seriously jeopardized by the disease of inertia and fixed habit, this book shall have succeeded wonderfully. If the constructive element of our Baptist body have faith to resolve that they will labor to bring the country church again into its own, it will initiate a period which the historian of the future shall declare to have been our entrance into an era of enlargement and world-usefulness.

2. As to prescription. Many have besought the Home Mission Board to suggest a program by which rural churches may be made more effectual. The specific answer of the Board to that request for the last three years has been the work of its Enlistment Department. This chapter and the one following will suggest a program, but I repeat that effectively to put the situation on the hearts of our people, so they will see what is the matter and warm to a determination to help remedy it, is far more important than any program which can be presented. The task is to help the patient to self-help. This involves convincing him that he is in a bad way, but can, if he will, come back into abounding health, and it involves saturating with a sense of his need those sources of influence from which he must receive aid toward improvement. To accomplish these results will be to achieve the vitalization of the country church, for love and conviction will find a way, but no amount of uninspired good advice and logical program will do it.

3. The limit of high pressure has been reached. Perhaps it is the Baptist principle of the independence and autonomy of the local church which has led us to provide a minimum of inspirational aid to the churches, and makes it singularly difficult to bring the denomination seriously

to consider a need so patently great, or to undertake measures which will bring the churches into a fuller life. A million a year is through the Home and State Boards the expression of the measure of our interest in upbuilding a work whose central idea is saving the lost and establishing churches, while, exclusive of Sunday-school effort, $20,000 a year, and that only for the past three years, represents our concern for a mission work the central idea of which is to inspire and aid these churches into a fuller service in saving the lives of their members. There are certain facts which are going to do much to force Baptists into giving larger attention to providing adequate instruction and inspiration to the masses of our church members. We have reached the limit of the progress of denominational work by high pressure methods. Apostolic example sanctions special collections, but it also requires regularity in giving and in principle requires that we provide sufficient instruction to God's people to enlist them in the practice of stewardship. This principle also definitely stands out in the teachings of our Lord. We have raised more and more money for missions and benevolence during the last fifteen years. Our progress has been truly remarkable, but so far as the great majority of the churches are concerned, it has been the progress of high pressure and not of instruction, and in thousands of them this high pressure did not stir a breeze sufficient to make the leaves of a tree rustle. Before the school boy, whose mathematical attainments end with the multiplication table, can do geometry and trigonometry, he must have some knowledge of fractions, the cube root, and algebra. Before a mass of churches whose attainments are bounded by the mental and spiritual grasp provided by once-a-month preaching by absentee

preachers, who are often without education, can possibly be enlisted in the sustained support of great mission or benevolent activities, it is absolutely essential that a program shall be put into operation which shall provide more adequate instruction for them. We may uncomprehendingly hold on to our present plan of pleas for causes big enough to stir the heart of any informed man or woman, but we shall continue to fail with the great mass of the uninformed and uninterested. We shall have to learn, perhaps by costly experience, that a denomination whose leadership can grasp great plans of world-saving, while it persistently closes its eyes to the needs and limitations of three-fourths of its own churches, need not be surprised if the churches close their ears to its routine of urgent pleas. Till the denomination clears its skirts of the reproach of lack of sympathetic vision of the needs and limitations of thousands of its own church units, it will not be able to marshall them effectively into a fellowship of service in world-saving. The denomination will always need to make special calls to meet emergencies in its work, but it cannot maintain its own highest self-respect and dignity, until it shall cease to rely on these as its mainstay. For when it issues these calls now, it knows very well that its loudest and most prolonged and heart-rending cry of need is not heard even as a faint whisper in thousands of our untaught churches.

4. Evangelism and growth. The remarkable growth of Baptists has come from their incomparable evangelism. A fine extensive growth necessarily creates a large problem of intensive development. We created the problem with matchless zeal, but for several generations hardly stopped long enough to discover that a problem existed. There were colleges, seminaries, and classes for training, but seldom did

their product touch the abounding rural church to inspire its life. Yearly in the protracted meeting more converts were brought in. As regularly were they left in an environment of somnolent church members and monthly preaching to learn as best they could what the Christian life means. Slumbering material life awoke about the lethargic church. First better farming and machinery and prosperity, then came education and social progress. But the church changed not from the annual revival, the annual call of a preacher, and the lax habit of the monthly sermon by an absentee preacher. The inevitable has at last come. Educated and ambitious young men and women cannot be held by a church which holds on to pioneer customs, while it has lost the pioneer force and initiative, and they are not being held. Our splendid evangelism continues, but it is not balanced by suitable teaching and training. We are losing many converts from our churches who are by an intense world-appeal drawn away from the influences of the sleepy church program. If it is indeed impossible for our Baptist democracy to take note of this situation and help it, it seems probable that not all the additions to our churches will much longer bring much growth in numbers against the large leakage of lost members. There are two particular classes of members which lack of teaching is losing to Baptists. They regard themselves as socially far apart, but spiritually they are one. There are the sentimental and socially ambitious in cities, who are caught by the appeal of fashion or of pseudo-philosophical mummeries, and who land in some Christian Science or other far-from-truth sect, or else forsake all church relations for society. It will be found that many of these had their early life in country churches. At the other extreme, are the ignorant people in remote communities, who

forsake Baptist churches for Holy Rollerism, Mormonism, Russellism, and other schismatic vagaries. Dr. Weston Bruner and the Home Mission Board evangelists associated with him cover the South in intimate touch with actual church conditions as no other group of men does. It is the unanimous testimony of these men that everywhere, both in city and country, there is an unprecedented falling away of our people to such false faiths as the above. Particularly are the pernicious doctrines of Russellism, with its "second chance" and essential denial of the deity of Christ, leading off the ignorant, and our preachers are not adequately meeting these errors. A church and a preacher asleep, make a fertile field for destructive errors to take root in, and Baptists are providing the land rent free in many a community, both urban and rural.

5. **Facts that startle.** An examination of the statistical tables of the minutes of the Southern Baptist Convenion from 1896 to 1916 reveals the fact that of 2,333,000 baptisms performed by the churches during the last twenty years, the apparent net gain in membership during the same period has been 1,156,000. As Southern Illinois Baptists joined the Southern Convention in 1910, bringing in 50,000 members not to be counted as a gain in a comparison between baptisms and net increase, the real gain for the period was 1,106,000, or 47.4 percent of as many as the number of baptisms for the twenty years. During the period there were 362,000 deaths, or 15.6 percent of as many as were baptized. What became of the 865,000 who are not accounted for in deaths and the net increase? They were lost in exclusions, erasures, and the disappearance of churches. During the twenty years our losses to the world and to other religions or churches were thirty-seven per-

cent of as many as were baptized. Our leakage was nearly two and a half times as large as the number of deaths and more than one-third as large as the entire number of baptisms. If figures have power to startle, these will startle. Any one may verify them for himself by some tedious work with our Convention statistical tables for the period covered. Was there ever in history such a leakage from a Christian body under any conditions short of war or great calamity? These hundreds of thousands who have disappeared from our churches—a large number of them to the world and its sins, another large group to false faiths, such as Russellism, Christian Science, Mormonism, and Holy Rollerism, and still others to other denominations—are a challenge to the adequacy of our once-a-month, great-evangelism, small-nurturing system, the force of which is compelling. Before it Baptists of the South stand convicted of having conducted their impact on society with an emphasis which was not balanced as between evangelism and the nurture of the new life. May it lead us to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Without such a change, the future does not contain good cheer for Baptists in this respect, for the more intense life becomes in our new civilization, the more surely the lure of the world will draw away many of those whom our system has left to the insecurity of only an a b c provision for instruction in the new life.

6. The local church. I have dealt in these chapters with a few capital needs of the country church, in supplying which both the denomination and the church have responsibility. There are other needs which only the church can supply. In his admirable pamphlet, "The Rural Church Problem," Dr. Charles King, of Missouri, gives a program for the local church which includes the following: The fear

of God, a vision of service, frequent gatherings, a recognition of stewardship, indoctrination, a Bible school, a testimony meeting, local leaders, and cordiality to strangers. Charles Roads in "Rural Christendom" also devotes much space to showing how the local church may master inertia and become a community-serving church. These inspiring books are recommended to pastors and others who desire a manual of practical suggestions. These writers have had experience in rural pastorates and are men of evident piety, who believe in organized effort, not instead of, but to give form and expression to, the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the church members. When such churches are pressed with the necessity of some organized effort to do the church work and serve the community, they may reply that their dependence is on the Holy Spirit and not on organizations. They claim the blessing of Pentecost, without considering that that gracious outpouring came only after a ten-days' prayer meeting in which they were all with one accord in one place. With a common purpose those early disciples had been in one group at the business of prayer. Certainly there was the spirit of organization, rather than that of a reluctant individualism, which holds aloof and says it will serve God in its own way. Back of that prayer meeting was there years of training by the greatest of all teachers, years in which the twelve had forsaken all they had to follow him, and in which he had more than once sent them forth as a band to put into practice what they had learned. The spiritual atmosphere at the Pentecost expressed itself through men and women who were surrendered, devoted, and united in a great sustained purpose. A church which to an appeal to unite and go to work, replies that it will just depend on the Holy Spirit for the power of God,

grieves the Spirit by its spiritual denseness and fails to understand the conditions on which the Spirit comes into men's hearts.

7. Democracy and organization. The church is an organism which should so organize itself as to avail itself of all of its forces. The human body is an organism. The education of its parts so that they co-operate is organization. Organization is nothing, except as it is a suitable means to an end. The twelve apostles were an organized class, with the Son of God as their teacher, because our Lord could thus better accomplish their instruction. The church is the only divinely established organism, whose binding principle is love and whose purpose is service. In rendering its service the church may organize within itself suitable agencies, such as Sunday-schools or women's societies, or, through co-operation with other churches, it may set up co-operative agencies, such as Associations and Conventions. But such is the persistence of the tradition of individualism and unconditioned liberty among many of our country churches that they still shy at any suggestion to organize the forces of the church for service. Over-organization exists when the organization takes energy and time for lesser matters which belongs to larger concerns, or when there is no steam in the boiler to make the machine go. As a substitute for steam the engine of organization is worthless, but not more so than unconfined and undirected steam. A church is pitiable indeed which is trying to serve the Kingdom through a lot of organized activities, though it has lost the sense of the power and presence of God, but not more so than another church lying flat of its back and resisting all efforts to get it to do something, with the assertion that all it needs is the Holy Spirit. It does mightily

need the Holy Spirit. But it has repeatedly grieved and driven him away by its refusal to use the power which he offered with which to do his work and serve the needs of men. So that its proposition to depend on the Spirit, instead of calling out such Gideon's bands as it can muster and putting them to work, is a species of pious self-deception.

8. Using the organizations. The number of organizations a church should encourage will depend on many things. Some city churches have so many subsidiary societies that energy is consumed in keeping them going which could be more profitably expended in making more vital and effective the general meetings and work of the church. But in the South few if any of the rural churches are over-organized, and most of them have no subordinate organization at all beyond the Sunday-school, which is often neglected, and held only during the pleasant months. Only about three-fourths of our churches have Sunday-schools, the number in the South being 18,000. Practically all the city and town churches have Sunday-schools, and also all the country churches which have more than monthly preaching. It is the once-a-month church which fails at this point; more than one-third of these are entirely without a Sunday-school. There were, in 1916, 8,203 Woman's Missionary Societies in our churches. The great mass of the 17,500 churches which have no woman's society are of the once-a-month variety. About fifteen years ago, an effort was made to introduce the Baptist Young People's Union in our churches. Despite the efforts of enthusiastic workers, the success of the organization was at first discouragingly small. The growing usefulness and success in the last few years of this organization for training the powers of the young people for religious service and leadership, is encouraging and instructive. At first in

nearly all the churches the young people were so universally uneducated in the religious life that the training organization could not make the connection necessary to accomplish more training. But in recent years the number of young people capable of serving in the Baptist Young People's Union has increased. The organization is even taking hold in some country churches, and there could be few more impressive tokens that a country church is a community-inspiring church than a successful Baptist Young People's Union organization. It is to be hoped that the number of young people's organizations in rural churches shall steadily increase. A country church which at once trains the young people to serve and satisfies their wholesome social instincts, is not likely to have to bemoan the departure of its boys and girls to some town as soon as they are able to get away. Likewise the Woman's Mission Society, in addition to its high function of missionary education, supplies for country women a greatly needed social contact, and helps to break the monotony which most women find so irksome in rural life. A country church with a live mission society is not likely to lose many of its farm-owning families to the town.

9. Church music. Writing on the value of music in country churches, Dr. C. C. Brown, of South Carolina, says: "I know some country churches which I think have been kept alive by some singing folk." Hardly any church, urban or rural, has more effectively used music than the First Church of Sumter, South Carolina, of which Dr. Brown was pastor for forty years. In the average rural church the music is in a sad state. A chaotic condition generally obtains as to song books. Frequently five or six different books are to be found in the same church, and these are

likely to be in all the various stages of dissolution. They differ all the way from one of the hymn books which has the sanction of the denomination to the latest collection of spiritual songs brought along by the last evangelist or singing master. Some evangelists introduce good books and probably more do not. There is usually no standard of excellence and many of the most popular books contain cheap, humpty-dumpty rythms, which in their effort to be spirited become barren and grotesque. The writer is a product and devotee of religious democracy, but if our Baptist democracy affords any means whereby we may hope soon to change the utter confusion in the song-book situation in most of the rural churches, he cannot see it. More attention should be given to music in our country churches. Whatever book may be used in the Sunday-school, some standard hymn book should be used in the regular service of worship. Some of the new and spirited music is good and useful, but much of it is absurd and empty of a suggestion of that reverence and devotion which should characterize the soul's approach to God. If our churches allow this music to displace the great old hymns, which set forth the deep heart-yearnings and soul-hunger of devout men and women in the past, they shall lose immeasurably. Like nearly everything else in the rural church, better music awaits capable attention on the part of the pastor. It needs that encouragement of the musical talent of the church which, of course, an absentee pastor of a once-a-month church cannot properly give. The absentee, once-a-month preacher, is very nearly the bete noire of the whole rural church problem. Let the preacher who is determined to put new life into country churches put forth some serious effort to improve the music. Country people are more fond of

singing than their city cousins. Capable effort at this point will not be without its reward.

10. Good reading. The general intelligence is increasing in country communities through better schools and in other ways. There is more leisure for reading than in the cities. He who wisely directs the reading of country people, especially the young people, will perform a service of immense value. Usually the country preacher has the best opportunity to do this, and he should not despise or neglect it. In some churches a reading room may be established and in others a circulating library maintained. But into the homes of every church by tactful effort the preacher may introduce wholesome books and periodicals. That they are hungry for reading, the phenominal spread of Russellism errors through tracts is a startling present illustration. Every rural preacher should be a self-constituted agent for his denominational State paper, and he should know something about tracts and their use, and about what books may be depended on both to interest and instruct the young people of the community. In fiction, adventure, history, and biography are gems which the rural mind would devour greedily and helpfully. A religious leadership which makes no use of the mighty power of the printing press is, to say the least, in dire need of vitalization and enlargement.

11. An open church. A large part of this book has been a plea for a rural church, the doors of which shall not be closed nearly all of the time—many of the 718 hours out of the 720 in each month. If these chapters have driven in the one truth that our churches need not go on in this pioneer custom and that to do so will be almost suicidal, not only to the churches but to the denomination, the author will rejoice while he lives that God has honored him by

permitting him to render so signal a service. The one sufficient way to open these closed church doors to a service more competent to meet the needs of our day, is to have for them a larger number of pastors capable of rendering the needed service. This cannot be without a better support for the preachers and without a general awakening of the denominational conscience to the importance of an adequate religious program for our rural churches. But the country church can and ought to supplement the increased pastoral service by keeping its doors open every Sunday for a Sunday-school and a song and prayer service. Baptists believe in lay preaching, but seldom practice it. There are thousands of country churches in which addresses by a consecrated layman would be appreciated.

12. What the town can do. Down in Georgia are three big-souled laymen, brothers, who came as young men from a retarded community out in the country. In Monroe and in other Georgia towns these men prospered in business and also in their souls. Their hearts never became weaned from the community of their childhood. They remembered the little ram-shackle rectangular church building where they first heard the gospel. A few years ago, one of these men told the people of that church that he and his brothers wanted to make them a present of a good church building. He said that the church and community had meant much to them, and the friendship of its members had cheered their lives since they had moved to town. These three men built and turned over to them a handsome and adapted modern brick church. There are thousands of prosperous laymen in towns and cities who ought to follow this knightly example of the Carithers brothers, in doing something to help revitalize the old country church in which they gave them-

selves to Christ. There are thousands of men who, instead of their model church attendance on Sunday mornings in the town where they live, might well use every opportunity, going two together, to get out and conduct special services in rural churches. A group of laymen from the First Church of Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1913, joined the Enlistment Worker in an Enlistment campaign, through which each of the thirty-seven churches of Tuscaloosa County Association was reached in an all-day service. Of the result Dr. L. O. Dawson wrote in The Home Field: "The First Church of Tuscaloosa, which furnished the lay helpers, received the greatest blessing of all. It was fine to see these consecrated men warming up to the task and how the importance of the work grew upon them as they delivered their messages from day to day. I do not suppose there was ever a set of busier fellows called away from their work to engage in a campaign like this. Their response was cheerful and even enthusiastic. The people heard them with profound interest, and by this giving to others our own church was helped beyond calculation." Many a city church needs some such prescription as this for spiritual dyspepsia. It would frequently be better than many eloquent sermons by the pastor as a promoter of spiritual health, for one condition of spiritual appetite is the exercise of active service.

13. The preacher and his salary. As to the future, the churches must cause young men who wish to enter the ministry to understand that, if they are not willing to do their utmost to educate themselves for the life work, they cannot receive ordination. The churches are restless about incapable preachers, and this is gratifying, but it is incumbent on them not to help make any more of that kind. As to the present, the great body of faithful country preach-

ers can do much to improve it. They cannot live on the meagre salaries often offered, but they can and must instruct the churches in the Bible teaching about the support of the ministry. They have not done so, and they usually shrink from it, but they must do it. If they speak with tactfulness, the moral stamina of the churches will respond, and if there are small criticisms of small souls, they ought to be willing to hear them. Not to be willing, to to suggest an estimate of their own calling which is not the highest. A young preacher in Mercer University was called to a country church, which was practically Hardshell; they did not believe in paying the preacher a stated salary. The young man withheld his acceptance till he next preached to them. His sermon was on the duty of the church to support its pastor. He spoke with sympathy but fearlessly, explaining the Scripture teachings on the subject. Then he told them that he could only become their pastor on condition they were willing to obey the Bible requirement of providing for the material needs of the man who served their spiritual needs. They cheerfully broke away from the habit of generations that day, secured pledges for the salary, and renewed their call. A preacher who is not strong enough and tactful enough to preach the truth on this point, will not be able to serve all the needs of the rural churches in our day. But the average pastor needs aid at this point. In paragraph 24 there is a suggestion as to how he may be helped.

14. Stewardship. Country pastors have done much more to teach their churches their obligation to missions and benevolence than they have to train them to pastoral support. But not a few have failed to teach them their duty to support missions, and a far larger number have not in

any sustained way taught them the Bible doctrine of stewardship. This doctrine is clear and unmistakable, and the pastors have been at serious fault who have not faithfully preached this doctrine. In addition to preaching, the pastor should encourage the church to appoint from its members a committee which shall yearly make an every-member canvass of the church for definite weekly or monthly contributions to the church support and to missions and benevolence. The members should be personally urged to give in proportion to their ability. The Home Board Enlistment Workers have successfully inaugurated this plan of church finances in scores of the weakest and most backward churches, and it can be successfully done wherever there is a willingness on the part of the church and faithful work by the committee. Some definite, serious effort to heed the Scripture teaching on stewardship will work wonders in thousands of our churches, and a competent, earnest pastor is the one essential thing to its introduction.

15. The preacher must study and work. A country preacher who expects to serve the intensified needs of rural churches of to-day, cannot afford to do less than his best. That does not mean that he should only do what may satisfy the expectations of the churches. Their expectations are largely based upon their habits and traditions, and these often need breaking. A country preacher can prepare one sermon and preach it around for a month in four or six churches in separated communities. Twelve sermons a year will be the intellectual effort of such a man for four churches. If he lives in a town or works a farm all the week, he is probably getting all he is worth when he is paid one-half of a support or less. The churches have a right to demand better service, but the preacher himself is about

the only man who can show them the way, and humanly speaking he will have to take the chances of getting a support while he is teaching the churches the better way. The country preacher must study. He must keep abreast of the best thought of the day by a discriminating use of books. He also needs to know his Bible better. Hundreds of our country preachers seem not to know how to fortify their people against the current pernicious heresies. Russellism is spreading all over the country. The preacher who does not know how to safeguard the people from this error, by all means should learn at once. It is possible for a preacher with vision and determination to turn a field of four once-a-month churches into twice-a-month churches, giving an extra afternoon service to each church. Probably they will not be enthusiastic for the change; many of them are enslaved by custom. But where it has been tried the afternoon service has often been as well attended as the morning service, and the Sunday-school has greatly improved. The pastor can educate the churches about the desirability of forming compact fields, and he can often tactfully toll the tardy little bodies of Christ into a common-sense determination to co-operate in a pastoral field. The Fifth Sunday meetings of the churches may wisely be used to educate the brethren in the needs of this and many other practical improvements. A preacher who cannot find enough on a country field to keep him busy every day is not the kind of man who would have large success in any other field. It is pertinent to repeat here a recommendation given elsewhere, that our country preachers take the correspondence course of study provided by our theological seminaries at Louisville and Fort Worth. There is no cost, except for the books used. One of the great advantages is

that the student will have the advantage of highly expert counsel in the books which he shall study. It would be wonderfully helpful to thousands of our preachers to take this course of study, and it would enrich the preaching in many a rural pulpit. The seminaries welcome correspondence on this subject. The value of this book is distinctly increased by a list of books, suitable for rural preachers, in Appendix E, kindly furnished by Dr. A. T. Robertson, of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

16. "The care of all the churches." Besides his constant labors as a missionary, and his long periods of preaching at different cities, Paul had upon him "the care of all the churches." Fellowship and the care of the churches within their own body were the first integrating forces which formed the District Associations in the South. While their standard for each local body for long did not include co-operative missionary and benevolent effort, the zeal with which the early Associations sought to serve the Apostolic function of caring for the welfare of the churches, is worthy of high praise. "The State of the Churches" formed the subject of the chief and sometimes almost only report which the early Association considered. This report now has far less prominence, where it has not indeed been entirely discarded. I plead for a revival of this subject in our Associations. Where, if not in the Association, have we in our Baptist system any agency which can render this service? State Secretaries cannot possibly give the intimate and close attention to local church needs which is essential. We have no ecclesiastical agency for this purpose similar to the presiding elder of the Methodists. The denomination at large does not and cannot do it, except in the service of the Enlistment Workers. It must be done by the Association

or in most cases it will be undone. It will fail if it is incompetently done. Some one should be appointed a year ahead to get up this report. He should work at it, and when he reads his report, at least one to two of the best hours of the Association should be given to discussing it. Understanding would lead to co-operation, than which the Associations hardly have a greater need. If other worthy interests seem to suffer, it will be better for them in the end, for our failure to follow the example of the Apostle and of our fathers in this matter is a serious lack in our Associations. A capable and interested worker will know how to investigate the actual facts about the condition of the churches for a period, not of one year only but of five or ten years. In order to encourage this work the Home Mission Board keeps on hand for free distribution blank forms suitable for use in making a survey of the churches in preparing the report for the Associations. In connection with the report, the formation of pastoral fields, pastoral support, the need of parsonages, and many other subjects vital to the welfare of the churches, would receive the prominent discussion they abundantly merit and which they are not getting in any Baptist assemblage of which I know.

17. The State Mission Board. The Mission Board in each State can do much to set before the churches proper standards for church practice. Standards set up by the State Board will necessarily be discussed at District Associations and come under the review of all the brethren, and this will give to the Board an educational opportunity of great value. To get a Baptist church to limit its liberty for the welfare of a group of churches is, however, a difficult matter. Several years ago, Secretary William Ellyson of the Virginia State Board inaugurated a campaign of the

Associations in behalf of compact pastoral fields, and the Board adopted a rule that no churches should be aided unless they are grouped into a field. The Board also urged that executive committees in Associations should not recommend churches for aid unless this rule is complied with. But of the results Mr. Ellyson writes: "If a church or a field becomes dissatisfied with the pastor, or if some of the leading brethren fall out with brethren in one of the other churches, they will break up the field, notwithstanding our rule. It is a hard matter to control individual Baptist churches. This has been my experience for twenty-six years." And this great layman exclaims: "Oh, how these churches do scatter! I am just reminded of the Dan River Association, which is composed of the churches of Halifax County. Not many years ago they were all grouped into compact fields with resident pastors. To-day they have very few grouped pastoral fields. Two of the pastors live in North Carolina, two in Lynchburg, one in Richmond, and two others outside of that county." Dan River Association has twenty-nine churches, seven of which were organized in the eighteenth century, three of them antedating the Declaration of Independence. Such a declaration from the State Secretary in a commonwealth which has been noted among Baptists for its orderly progressiveness is not encouraging, but it powerfully suggests the need of a strong and sustained campaign to teach the churches that their democracy does not relieve them of the obligation of fellowship and co-operation for the common welfare of the Kingdom. Question: Did drifting preachers, as well as church independence, break up the Dan River fields? "Is it not true," asks Dr. C. C. Brown, "that a church will leave a field simply because a cheaper man presents himself? This is a trouble

in South Carolina."

18. Proposed requirements for mission churches. Though the facts in the preceding paragraph are calculated to dispel utopian dreams, the question is here raised of the propriety of the State Boards establishing requirements which shall discourage once-a-month preaching by absentee pastors, and provide a minimum wage for pastors. If the success of the effort is small, it may at least serve to bring the denomination to a wholesome self-knowledge, which is a prerequisite to any worthy and sustained program for enlisting and enlarging our thousands of sleeping churches. However difficult the State Board may find it to bring to realization even the simplest and most patently needed improvements, the fact remains that these Boards are agencies of first-rate influence among the churches, and under their patient but determined leadership the day of our denominational awakening to a real program of betterment would be greatly accelerated. The author was recently enheartened to observe how the brethren at a South Carolina Association warmed to the State Secretary's proposition to require the churches and preachers which the Board aids, to learn and practice at least some primary lessons in field organization. If the State Boards would decline to give State Mission money for the support of a missionary pastor unless the churches in which he is to serve shall pay an amount which along with the Board's gift would make a minimum salary of, say $900, it would be a great advance step in driving out from among us the general reproach of the churches failing to support their pastors.

19. Educational institutions. Baptists look to their schools not only for trained minds and personalities, but for

the propagation of proper ideals of life and service. This they have a right to do, and the surest way the schools have to a permanent pleace in the hearts of our people is by putting the stamp of sane and balanced religious ideals and purposes on the young men and women whom the denomination puts into their hands. If they should fail at this point, many will doubt whether it is worth while to go to the expense of endowing and sustaining them, for excellent mental gymnastics may be had in the schools afforded by the State. Our denominational schools have rendered and are rendering useful service to the Baptist body in training youth who have both fine powers and high ideals as to what life means. Their product has been invaluable in furnishing workers and leaders for the denomination who help it to go forward. But there seems to be a growing conviction that they have not always made full use of their opportunities. The general failure of these institutions to open up to the students the large significance and worth of rural life and of service to country people has not been creditable either to the schools or to the denomination, which had its origin and still has its greatest strength and opportunity in the country. No railing accusation is here brought against the schools. If they have been at fault, our whole denomination, including the rural people themselves, have shared it. But in effect our schools have gone to the country for nearly all of the material which they proposed to fashion into polished instruments for service to the common weal, and have returned very little of it to the country with a vision of what may be done to advance its life. It is a fact that our college graduates have largely despised the country as a place to live and serve, and, unconscious though they doubtless were

of it, the schools which educated them were not without responsibility. It has come to pass that some college and seminary men are catching a vision of the large opportunities in the rural field, but we are yet without an appreciative denominational attitude to back them up. As a specimen I give the case of a young pastor in rural Missouri, who has received the approved scholastic training. He writes: "Now when I meet my former classmates there is a certain strangeness. They seem to think that it must have been failure in the urban pastorate I had before I voluntarily chose country work, that forced me out into the country. Yet I am now more thoroughly convinced that the country is where strong preachers are most needed. My people have more culture and wealth than the membership of an average city church, and are more receptive and appreciative. All they lack is vision, and how are they to get the vision unless someone with a vision goes to them?" Both Christian statesmanship and filial affection for the life of the open places, which have nurtured the strength and the leadership and the poetry of this section, demand that our schools shall re-discover the country, which perhaps they and their graduates have seemed to despise because they thought they already knew all about it.

20. Conventions. I have attended the Southern Baptist Convention yearly, with one exception, for twenty years. In all that time I have heard only two speeches before it on the necessity of vitalizing our rural churches, except indeed such utterances as a representative of the Home Mission Board may have made since the new Enlistment Department was established. Meantime I have heard before that body many speeches on the city and on scores of other great and needy problems—but not one of

them needier or greater than that of our rural life and churches. I have in these years attended perhaps sixty State Baptist Convention meetings. I have never at one of these heard an address on the country church and its need, though the State Secretary usually makes reference to backward country districts which would have almost no preaching at all but for State Missions. It is also true that within the last few years the Home Board representative has usually had something to say of rural needs. The official staff of the Home Mission Board makes not a few special addresses on specified Home Mission themes. They have been asked to speak before non-Baptist assemblies on the country church needs, but not one of the staff has so far been requested to speak on this topic by any Baptist country church situation in the South. The churches themselves usually do not know it, neither does the denomination seem to know it, on whose leadership we must depend for arousing our Baptist body to a knowledge of the facts church, institution of learning, convention, or institute! This seems to suggest that there is still in the denomination very little realization that there is a man-sized crisis in the and needs. As the author has for seven years in the mission monthly of the Home Board sought to agitate and educate on this subject, he has often felt like a man lost in a great forest, to whose cry no answer comes save echoes from the lonely and gloomy cathedral spaces! The denominational press is becoming aroused, and the Home Board has received encouragement from some of our most thoughtful brethren, especially the State Secretaries, to keep up the agitation and, so far as we know, no criticism. In these omens the author takes courage. They indicate that Baptist people accept the principle involved in agitation for rural

church sufficiency. The time is now at hand in which there will be an increasing demand for an expression of the principle through activities suitable to show it forth in tangible results. Our Conventions and denominational gatherings will yet give the country church more of that consideration which its importance merits in inspirational addresses and denominational programs.

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER VIII.

1. What is the chief purpose of this book? May we expect a quick remedying of the inadequate country church methods? Tell what has put the rural church behind its day. What is set forth under the figure of a wagon sunken in in the slough?
2. Show why prescription may be immature. Tell of the need of getting the patient and his friends to know he is sick.
3. What relation is suggested between Baptist independence and our neglect of nurturing the churches? Give the figures for domestic missions (evangelism) and for denominational effort to vitalize the churches. Why will Baptists be forced to take thought of the untrained churches? Tell of the Apostolic example and teaching concerning collections and stewardship. Tell of our progress for fifteen years and its limitations. Why have many churches had no part in it? If the denomination closes its eyes to tardy church needs, can we expect the tardy church to hear its loudest appeals?
4. Tell of our evangelism. Show where it usually leaves the converts. Show that it has left most of the rural churches drowsy and unprogressive. Tell why we are losing many converts from our churches. Give two classes who make up our Baptist losses. Give the testimony of Home Board evangelists as to our great losses to false faiths.
5. Give the figures showing Baptist losses for the last twenty years. Give the percentage of losses. Tell what has be-

come of the people lost. Can Baptists afford to ignore the this amazing record of losses?

6. Give Dr. Charles Roads' program for the local church. Tell how some backward churches excuse themselves from actively taking hold to do something. Show that the spirit of organization and effort was at the Pentecost.
7. Give an estimate of the place of organization in church life. When does over-organization exist? Do rural churches suffer from it, or from under-organization?
8. Discuss conditions which should limit the number of church organizations. Tell of the amount of organization in our Baptist rural churches. Trace the record of the B. Y. P. U. and show how useful it and the W. M. S. may be in a rural church.
9. Tell of the condition of church music in many country churches. Tell of the song-book chaos. Name some things which may be done to improve it.
10. Show how the rural preacher may helpfully direct the reading of his people.
11. Give the proportion of time the once-a-month church is open for preaching. Show why it is essential to have more preaching and pastoral service. Name other ways of keeping the church doors open.
12. Tell what three brothers in Georgia did for their old country church, after they had moved to town. Quote Dr. L. O. Dawson, showing the blessing that came to his laymen through serving in a campaign to help rural churches. What prescription is given for spiritual dyspepsia?
13. Ought young preachers to be ordained who do not show willingness to do their utmost to train themselves for the work? Is the restlessness of many churches about untrained preachers a good thing? What must these churches do? Tell of the preacher's duty to preach on pastoral support. Tell the story of a student preacher who did this.
14. Tell of the preacher's duty to preach on stewardship. Tell of the financial plans of the Home Board Enlistment Workers.

15. Tell of the duty of the country preacher to study. Show how some of them get along by making only twelve sermons a year. Is such a man worth a living support? Show some special study needs of many rural preachers. Do all of them know how to fortify their people against Russellism and other false faiths? Show how an afternoon service may transform a once-a-month field into a twice-a-month field. Tell how fifth Sunday meetings may profitably be used. Tell of the value of correspondence courses of study.
16. Tell of Paul's care of all the churches. Show the relation of our Associations to this function. Tell why "the State of the Churches" report should be revived. What of State Secretaries and Enlistment Workers? How can a survey report at the Association be made profitable? Tell of the Home Board blanks for this purpose.
17. Show how State Boards can help. Quote Secretary William Ellyson of Virginia on the difficulty of holding Baptist churches together. Give Mr. Ellyson's statement about churches in Dan River Association. Is this extreme independence creditable to Baptist churches? Quote Dr. Brown.
18. Tell of requirements on the part of State Boards that may aid in chastening over-done church independence. Ought the denomination at large to back up such an effort to get churches to limit their liberty for the sake of the cause of Christ?
19. Show the responsibility of educational institutions. Tell of the good work they have done. Show where they have often failed to serve rural life and churches. Quote a Missouri pastor, showing how the denomination minimizes country preachers.
20. Tell of the author's estimate of the amount of attention our Conventions give to country church problems. Tell of the Home Board experience in requests for special addresses. What agencies show some signs of becoming aroused? What hopeful outlook is there?

CHAPTER IX.

A COUNTRY CHURCH DEPARTMENT.

1. The Department created. The Home Mission Board has an educational function aside from its concrete activities. This Board has conducted for Southern Baptists an educational propaganda which looks to rural church vitalization and sufficiency, and has thus added a significant service to others which will lead the historian to credit the Board with vision and constructive statesmanship. The Board has also led in supplying a suitable task in which the whole denomination may put itself behind the work of rural church improvement. At its annual meeting in 1913, on the recommendation of a special committee, composed of W. A. Borum of Mississippi, A. E. Boyd of Illinois, Finley F. Gibson of Arkansas, and Charles E. Maddry of North Carolina, it created a Department of Enlistment, through which with the approval and co-operation of State Boards, it was proposed to employ Enlistment Workers who should labor each in a restricted territory of not more than a few Associations to secure such results as these chapters have urged. This activity has been in progress three years and the Workers have secured large and blessed results.

2. Enthusiastic support not apparent. But candor requires the confession that this special effort has not yet seemed to take a strong hold upon the denomination. The Enlistment Workers themselves, some of whom hold on to it at smaller salaries than they would secure in the pastorate,

are without exception enthusiastic believers in their work. Good men always are who are permitted to see their highest visions of service shaping themselves into blessed realities under the work of their hands. These men have encountered difficulties which grew out of their work not being understood. Their engagements are more than they can fill and the joyful gratitude of the churches they are often able to serve is a sweet compensation. But in some sections there is a failure among brethren of influence to understand what the workers are trying to do, and a corresponding lack of sustaining approval. The Department has only fifteen Workers. For two years it had a Department leader, but after his resignation for another position, no successor was chosen. These Workers may do great and needed work, as their records show they have done, but if there is lacking on the part of the denomination a sustaining appreciation of the work, this effort will at best continue only on a small scale. Neither State Boards nor the Home Board can go far forward in any work without evidences of denominational support. But at the same time the denomination has a right to expect them to show real vision and constructive and progressive leadership, and will do so.

3. Evidences that the work is needed. In practical results a better pastoral support, compact pastoral fields, more provision for preaching the gospel, and rural parsonages, are some of the things the Worker and the pastor go after. In yet other poor, discouraged churches, there is no pastor. The Worker kindles the smouldering embers of faith, and nurtures them into a cheerful flame of hope and service, leaving the church with provision for regular pastoral service. Baptists do not want and will not have men with ecclesiastical authority to serve them, but we may learn

something from our Methodist brethren. For generations Southern Methodists have had their elders, who now number a group of about 400, whose daily life is the care of all the churches, to understand intimately their needs and viewpoints, to provide a fellow-helper to the pastor and an understanding friend, to aid in forming fields and providing pastoral support, parsonages, etc. With what result? What has this service of 400 trained men meant to the Methodists, and in what respects, if any, has it enabled them to surpass the dominant Baptist idea that the pastor is the key, and that the local church must not be approached by the denomination to aid it, lest its autonomy be jeopardized? Dr. John M. Moore, of Nashville, the Methodist Home Secretary, in response to a question, wrote the author that practically every Methodist country church contributes to missions. Over against that are our thousands of Baptist churches which by a survey in 1913 were shown to be giving nothing and many more which gave less than five dollars the year for missions. In an earlier chapter attention has been directed to the fact that the Methodist pastors in the country and small cities receive considerably better salaries than the Baptists.

4. **Learning from the Methodists.** The Baptist pastor has preached local church independence. The church has accepted the principle and has often seemed willing to let it apply to the means by which he may secure a support. Among many of our people it seems to have become an accepted principle that neither worker, secretary, superintendent, helper, nor any other creature shall under any guise be encouraged to try to render aid for the whole spiritual body in helping to bring the tardy churches from their inert condition to a larger and fuller life in Christ. Besides paying

their presiding elders a total of certainly not less than $400,000, and though they lack about 500,000 of having as many members as Baptists, the Methodists last year gave slightly more than Baptists to Home and Foreign Missions. What accounts for this superior Methodist efficiency? The presiding elder. And through the Enlistment Workers, if Baptists will receive it, we can accomplish in our churches results even more gratifying, for our Enlistment Workers, relieved from the official duties which take part of the time of the presiding elder, concentrate their entire effort on constructive activities for building up the churches. Will Baptists receive it? I believe they will. They can do the work entirely as helpers of the pastors and churches and absolutely without an atom of ecclesiastical authority.

5. Enlistment work explained. Perhaps it would be better if the Enlistment Department was called a Country Church Department. Many town and city churches sadly need enlistment, and theoretically the Department has a mission to them. But a denomination nearly all of the cultural efforts of which, in institutes, Sunday-school assemblies, mission societies, young people's rallies, and similar gatherings, regularly center among its urban churches, would seem to do wisely in undertaking at least one great service in terms which frankly commit it to seeking the welfare and efficiency of our great mass of rural churches. Perhaps this name would also contribute to a readier and more general understanding of the effort than has resulted under the name Enlistment Department. The churches need enlisting, but first and chiefly they need enlargement, vision, adequate teaching. Enlistment secured at a less price will be ephemeral. Apparently not a few otherwise well informed leaders in our body think that the Enlistment work is only

another attempt to try to get money from the churches by a quick route, though much effort has been put forth to show that this is not true, and the work itself is a demonstration that enlargement and efficiency, rather than high pressure promises of financial advance, are the results sought. True, the Workers report large financial advances in the churches, as would be expected where they have enlarged the church in the comprehension of its mission and encouraged it by showing it how to elicit its own financial resources in glad giving. But this is a far greater and more significant service than giving the church a lesson in a species of soil robbery through getting money out of people who do not appreciate the need and value of the objects for which they are asked to give it. The Enlistment Workers aid in improving the soil by cultivating it and claiming the showers of blessing which God has promised to prayerful effort. Fruitfulness has followed as a natural consequence.

6. The pastor and Enlistment. Many things are yet to be wrought out through the actual experience of the Enlistment Workers, but it has already been demonstrated that tact and sympathy on the part of these men give them an open door in the hearts of far more pastors than they are able to reach in their work of co-operative helpfulness. It has also abundantly demonstrated that they can often accomplish a work which there is little hope the pastor would have accomplished without their aid. The Enlistment man has proven a kind of John the Baptist, crying aloud in a wilderness of torpid church habit and announcing a new day of progress and service. But he has done more; he has regularly justified prophecy by causing fulfilment to follow close on its heels. The Government has done much for

farmers in recent years, but nothing which has met with such an immediate success and appreciation as the county farm demonstrators, who know how and who go to the farmer and show him how. The farmer is the "key," but the demonstrator is the supreme key-polisher and soil and plant-life expert. So, if Southern Baptists will hearken, is the Enlistment Worker, who goes to help the pastor and church! It will still remain true, however, that the pastor is the key to the situation, even after we have ceased to use that formula as an excuse for the denomination not seriously trying to help the pastor and church into a fuller life of service. Rev. H. T. Williams, of Chase City, Virginia, in addition to his urban pulpit, has for thirteen years been pastor of New Hope Church out in the country. Able to give it only the second Sunday each month and convinced that merely a monthly service gave small hope of progress, he gradually developed a program by which the Sunday-school should, each Sunday morning of the four in a month, be followed respectively by the Sunbeam Band meeting, preaching service, the Woman's Mission Society, and a prayer meeting. In addition the B. Y. P. U. meets summer Sunday afternoons and winter Sunday nights. This plan has worked admirably at New Hope. Pastors equally alert could bring similar results in hundreds of churches. The general success of enlistment effort through pastors, would release the Enlistment Workers, but the day is not near when Baptists of the South will not need twenty times as many Enlistment Workers as we have yet employed. As a matter of simple fact, many pastors have become as crystallized in the outworn pioneer habit as the churches usually have. And there are still hundreds of pastors in tardy sections who are, and left alone will remain, opposed to all

progress. Yet these men can be loved into better things by a brother who will come up near, though they will never be preached into progress by our affirmations from afar. The Associations, Conventions, newspapers, mission magazines, tracts, and a live Country Church Department, working together, will be none too much to secure a result so abundantly worth securing.

7. The essence of Enlistment. The essence of the task of the Enlistment Workers is to establish the pastor firmly in the life of the church. Rev. A. L. Stephens, Enlistment Worker in northern Alabama, has coined a slogan which we may well adopt for the Enlistment cause: "Take care of the pastor in the rural districts and the pastor will take care of Kingdom interests." Brother Stephens has found that in the more retarded churches it is unwise to make an every-member canvass for both benevolences and salary. Untaught people find it confusing and may get an idea they are being exploited. After trying the combination plan and failing for a year, for eighteen months he has worked the single plan of raising the salary with complete success for both the salary and the benevolences. He co-operates with the pastor and brings the church to support him. Then he says to the pastor: "We are taking care of you and we want you to take care of the benevolences." He declares that nearly all the pastors meet the challenge, and gives in proof the story of three exceedingly retarded churches which together had paid $47 for salaries and $10.42 for missions. The year after the Field Worker had led them to take better care of the pastors, the salaries totaled $350, mission gifts $147, and repairs $138. No special effort had been put forth by him for missions and repairs. He helped to establish pastoral service; the pastor helped missions even in a

larger percent than his own salary had been increased. The simplicity of this plan appeals to the people, and the patent unselfishness and respect for the pastoral office which it enables the Worker to show will commend it to the judgment of the denomination. Moreover, it works.

8. **Typical instances of Enlistment.** Before me are two other illustrations of Enlistment work, just reported by the Field Workers. In 1913 four churches in Central Association, North Carolina, had each a different once-a-month pastor. The four contributed to all objects $860, had in the Sunday-schools a total of 278 scholars, and from the protracted meetings had twenty-six additions. Came the Enlistment Worker to help. First he imparted vision and desire for better things. Second he patiently showed them how to transform the desire into better actual practice. The changes were slow but forward-looking. In 1916 those four churches had one pastor. They gave for the year $1,231 to all objects, had 562 in the Sunday-schools and seventy-eight were added to the churches. Evangelism had gone forward 200 percent, the reach of the Sunday-school 100 percent, and the finances forty-three percent. Blessed results not reducible to figures were equally pronounced. Enlistment Worker T. J. Moore found a little rural church in south Mississippi, suffering sadly from inert habits and a festering church row. Within a few months three pastors had been called and each of them had resigned. There was no pastor. Brother Moore almost pushed himself into the situation. He preached a week without any apparent results. He wrestled much with God in prayer. The thaw came. On Sunday they adopted a monthly system of pastor's support, called a capable pastor at more than twice the salary they had ever before promised, contributed $30

cash to missions, made confession to God and to one another of their sins, and shed tears of joy in a new-found church life. A year has passed and the church is going forward, whereas it had been practically dead and its members fair game for the first Holiness, Russellism, or Mormon sectary who might come along.

9. Enlistment should be greatly increased. Dr. William E. Hatcher, one of the greatest seers Southern Baptists ever produced, in one of his last published utterances addressed to Southern Baptists, pled for an application of the principle of the Enlistment work, in words which he concluded as follows: "It is at least as important to save what we already have, as it is to save that which is lost." With his mind on the relation of the thousands of our non-co-operative churches to the foreign mission enterprise, Dr. George W. Truett in a Southern Baptist Convention report declared: "We may not hope ever to approximate our duty to the heathen world, as long as the people on the home fields are untaught and undeveloped. No conception of missions is complete that does not contemplate missions to weak and undeveloped churches, as well as missions where the gospel has never been preached." Dr. J. B. Gambrell says on this subject: "Our supreme duty is to project a great movement throughout the churches in the South for their betterment and proper enlistment, training them in the practices and principles of the gospel." In 1916, Dr. John F. Purser, of Atlanta, President of the Home Mission Board, on returning from a vacation in the mountains of North Georgia, where he had attended a Baptist Association and in a speech saved a report favoring missions from being rejected, with his face aglow remarked to some friends: "If I had some means of support while doing it, I believe I could spend the

most useful five years of my life among the churches in that Association, opening up the truth of God's word to them." One of the Enlistment Workers in the enthusiasm of the blessed results which he has regularly accomplished exclaims: "If the missionaries in the Associations would devote their time to this kind of work, it would be more profitable than is the old-time method of preaching from place to place, provided they had training along this line." The author fully shares this conviction, and suggests that the Enlistment Workers who have had successful experience in this service are the best men through whom the training could be accomplished.

10. Conscience needed for this cause. The Enlistment work of the Home Board and State Boards cannot and will not impress itself on the denomination in a large way, except as there is denominational conviction to back it up, including a determination on the part of the Boards themselves to see that it has a fair chance, instead of dropping it after the trial of one or two Workers in a whole State for a year or two, who in some cases may actually not have had time to learn how to do the work or may have no vision of its possibilities, beyond the well-known practice of inspirational speeches, not sustained by capable actual work. This is not Enlistment, it is merely speech-making! In a few States we have tried two or three men for two or three years to do a work to which perhaps twenty presiding elders during all the years have profitably devoted possibly two-thirds of their time, and, almost without trying it, there is evidence that in some places it may be discontinued. A plea is here made for the enlargement of this work. It is urged that State Secretaries shall recommend for the work only men with a passion for and gifts to do it, and that

more effort be put forth to educate our people as to what the work is, so that they will not criticise it for lack of knowing what it is.

11. The little mother. I salute the country church as the little mother of the Baptist denomination. Mothers give themselves for their offspring, and this the country church has done. When life and the opening world beckon to the strapping youngsters who have gotten away from the apron-strings, the fascination of adventure and novelty makes many a boy forget the little mother who toiled and suffered and loved, in his preoccupation with and over-stimulation from the passing hour. Even so an over-grown denomination, still youthful in its American development, responds to the lure of many a novel and great task, and in its effort at efficient outlook forgets the quiet and uncomplaining source from which sprang its very life, and from which that life must ever be renewed. I preach of the common task, which has been neglected. I plead for a gratitude which shall remember to give thanks to the little mother through whose ministries most of us received our cleansing from sin. I herald a statesmanship which shall be able to see that great rivers of pure water spring only from thousands of modest brooklets whose waters are sweet, that the sources of things are of more moment than the spectacular event which the world acclaims. I sing of the little country church, out among the fields and forests, in the grove by the roadside and near the fields from whence comes as a murmur the call of men who labor at the common tasks of the day. Uncelebrated by the hastening world, suffering from old-fashioned ways, which are sweet in motherly women, but gravely threaten the little church mother, who is dazed to feel that the busy world has some-

how journeyed so far from the last first Sunday, that it has forgotten the place of worship and prayer. Poor, forgotten country church!—worthy to be loved and nurtured and remembered alway. Would God I had cunning words with which I might charm the heart of the spiritual bodies which you have nurtured, so that they would not so long pass by on the other side, and leave you forlorn from neglect and sometimes beaten and half dead from false teachers, who have robbed you of faith! Would that they might come with loving ministries to your needs, who have cheerfully done much more for them than they can ever repay!

12. A prayer. Lord Jesus, whatsoever things are true in these pages, wilt thou graciously impress upon the hearts of those who may read. Wilt thou especially open the eyes of the Baptist people of the South that they may look with discerning love upon this great body of churches out in the open places, through which thou hast so long kept the knowledge of thyself among American men and women. Bless these modest churches of thine, O Lord. Some of them are almost entirely untaught, babes in Christ. Many of them have little vision of their own needs and possibilities, and not a few are standing still. There are others which have furnished leadership to help many, but yet have none to serve their own needs. They long for better things, but do not know how to take hold. May it be pressed home upon this Southern Baptist body that they have not obeyed thy commands concerning these thousands of lagging and untaught churches. May a consuming desire be born in us to help these churches into that fuller life and service which thou hast commanded. Show us thy way to perform the doing of it. And thus may we be able to claim thy promise,

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the ages." Amen!

TEST QUESTIONS ON CHAPTER IX.

1. What function has the Home Board besides its concrete efforts? Tell of the creation of the Enlistment Department of the Board.
2. Tell of the degree of interest the denomination has shown in this work. What of the interest of the Field Workers? Tell of the record of their work.
3. How many presiding elders have Southern Methodists? Show how the Methodist rural churches are more enlisted than Baptist churches. Compare the salaries paid.
4. Show how the preachers have inculcated an independence which some churches blindly turn against pastoral support. Tell of high sensitiveness of some Baptists about the denomination aiding a church to a fuller life. Tell of the probable cost of presiding elders to Methodists, and of their comparative liberality to missions. Show that Enlistment Workers can do as much or more for Baptists.
5. Why might "Country Church Department" be a better name than "Enlistment Department?" What is more fundamental than enlistment? Tell of misconceptions some Baptists have about the Enlistment work. Tell of the financial results of the work. Do they come from seeking money or the people?
6. Show how Enlistment Workers often help the pastor to do what he would never accomplish alone. Compare Enlistment Workers with County Farm Demonstrators. Tell how Pastor H. T. Williams of Virginia keeps a once-a-month church open every Sunday.
7. Give the results obtained by Enlistment Worker A. L. Stephens in three remote Alabama churches. Tell why he canvasses for pastoral support and not for benevolences. What results?
8. Give story of Enlistment results in four North Carolina churches. Of Enlistment Worker T. J. Moore's resuscita-

tion of a row-torn church in Mississippi.

9. Quote Dr. William E. Hatcher, Dr. George W. Truett, and Dr. J. B. Gambrell's utterances, magnifying the principle of Enlistment work. Tell of Dr. John F. Purser's experience in a mountain Association, and his estimate of the opportunity there for useful service helping the churches. Quote an Enlistment Worker's words about turning associational missionaries into Enlistment Workers.
10. Show how organized Enlistment work is bound largely to fail if the denomination does not become generally aroused as to its value. Show the difference between Enlistment and one-day inspirational speech-making.
11. In what respects is the little country church the denominational mother. What is said of the common task, statesmanship, obscure sources compared with the spectacular event? Tell of the uncelebrated little church by the roadside. Is it worthy of our love and aid? Does the student think Southern Baptists will continue to pass by on the other side, and leave the little mother uncherished?
12. [Let the teacher in connection with the closing lesson have a special prayer, or series of prayers by members of the class for the country church, that its needs may be put on the hearts of all our people.]

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

1. The arrangement of the book is intended at once to meet the needs of a Mission Study Class and of the general reader. To serve the requirements of class work the paragraphs have been numbered and given appropriate headings. It is thought that this arrangement, with the corresponding questions at the end of each chapter and certain other suggestions now to be given, will supply the requirement of classes.

2. For teachers who are organizing a class for the first time it may be suggested that it is desirable that the class shall have a secretary, who shall enroll the members and keep the record of class attendance and work; that the entire time of the first meeting may be profitably spent in organizing the class, in the teacher giving a general outline of the work being done and assigning the first lesson. But, if the class should be pressed for time, it is possible for the teacher to present the first lesson at that meeting in the form of a lecture.

3. To gain valuable material for the use of the class by way of illustration and also to train the members in survey work, it will be found very helpful, either before the first class meeting or as rapidly thereafter as possible, to have a member of the class, or a committee of two or three members, to conduct a survey of the local District Association and if possible also of one typical rural Association besides, somewhere in your State.

4. Association minutes for period of five years should be the basis of this survey, but should not be the only dependence. The Home Mission Board will on application furnish free survey blanks for the use of the class, or each class can make its own survey blanks. The work should cover with careful detail such points as the following: The number of once-a-month and twice-a-month and all-time churches; the number of each class which has grown, stood still, or declined in membership during five years; the amount of money raised by each class for

missions and benevolence, for pastors' salaries and for local expense; number of Sunday-schools, woman's societies and other auxiliary societies; the average length of the pastorates in each class of churches; the number of absentee pastors, country parsonages, etc.

The above suggestions do not cover the entire field, but will indicate the character of material which will be found most useful.

5. It is suggested that a number of the chapters will afford valuable material for use in the prayer meetings of the church or for sermonic material, where it is not practicable to form a Mission Study Class, or, better, in conjunction with the work of the class. It will tend to give dignity to the work and to bring before the entire congregation the great importance of the theme, if at the close of the course of study the pastor should be asked to preach a special sermon on the Country Church and its needs under the auspices of the Mission Study Class. It might be even more fitting to secure the State Secretary or one of the Home and State Mission Board Enlistment men to render this service. Such a presentation would thrill the entire church and do much to help Baptists understand their denomination.

6. In Chapter VIII, paragraph 9, brief attention is given to the need of improving the music in the churches as a means of increasing their usefulness. In many churches the class leader may provide an instructive and interesting demonstration of the former and present musical practice of country churches. This exercise is likely to develop more interest in the urban churches than in the rural churches themselves. Secure either one or more of the best singers in the church and with the recitation on Chapter I or IV have rendered two or three of the typical old hymns.

SUGGESTIONS FOR EACH CHAPTER.

If the class will do the associational survey work suggested above, parts of the material secured will be found applicable, by way of illustration, in connection with practically every chapter in the book.

Chap. I. The following items may help: A paper of five minutes' length on the teaching principle in the New Testament, or an address of equal length on the work of the old-time rural preachers, or a paper or address showing how material life is outstripping the church in the rural community. Parallel reading: Chapters I and II in "Baptist Missions in the South."

Chap. II. If the teacher desires, it may (except in a city so large that the country is cut off from view) be helpful to have a brief paper or speech on the rural developments which have taken place in the rural life of the local county within the last ten years. Free bulletins on rural life development may be had from the Agricultural Department at Washington, or from your State Agricultural Department or Agricultural College.

Chap. III. The Report on Agriculture of the Thirteenth Census will be fruitful in studying land tenure conditions, as will a bulletin of the Agricultural Department at Washington on Land Tenure.

Chap. IV. "The Rural Church Problem," by Rev. Charles Roads, of Louisiana, Missouri, presents ably the spiritual nature of the country church problem, the snare of an unbalanced emphasis on mere activities, and the impracticability of the union church scheme.

Chap. V. An open parliament on the rural minister would be sure to develop an interesting and helpful discussion. Ten minutes or more could thus be profitably spent. Chapter II in "Baptist Missions in the South" will be suited for parallel reading. A brief paper on the duty of the denomination, its colleges, seminaries, etc., to the country minister would develop alert interest.

Chap. VI. This chapter will develop a sustained interest, without any extras. A brief paper or brief address on the good work some country preacher has done in a community within the knowledge of a member of the class would be helpful. The Publicity Department of the Home Mission Board would like to make use of any striking paper of this kind, if the teacher or author will send it; also of the results of any other original investigation done in the class. Equally valu-

able, or more so, would be a paper on the Bible teaching about the pastor, and a discussion of how the average country church meets this requirement.

7. The teacher will hardly need the suggestion that this perplexing problem should be studied with patience and a large sympathy. Faultfinding is worse than useless. The right perspective can be kept by remembering that these country churches have done about everything else for the denomination besides sustain their pastors and give to co-operative work properly, and that proper aid would bring them forward in these respects. A brief paper on the salaries paid by the country churches in your local Association would bring the subject home. Give the once-a-month church salaries also separately.

8. A brief paper on the Bible teaching on the duty of supporting the pastor would be fine. See paragraph 11, also paragraph 5 in Chapter VII. It should be prepared by one of the best Bible students in the class. A discussion of how an annual presentation before the Association in which survey methods should be used in the report on "The State of the Churches," should be of great practical value. A discussion of reading matter suitable for rural homes and how to introduce it, should be of profit. So would be a list of books and periodicals suitable for rural homes.

9. The Home Mission Board will, on application, send tracts explaining its Enlistment work. So will the State Secretary or Enlistment Workers in States where this work is done. A paper which would raise the questions of how our Baptist democracy limits and conditions our helpful approach to the tardy elements of our own denomination would give an opportunity for some profound and greatly needed thinking.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

In the following list no effort is made to give all the books which have been published on Country Church and Life, but only those which seem to promise most usefulness to the student. The price of the books has been furnished by the Baptist Book Concern at Louisville, Kentucky. They may be had of the Baptist Book Concern or from any Baptist book store or from the Publicity Department of the Home Mission Board.

	Price Net
The Country Town—Wilbert L. Anderson	$1.00
Country Life Movement in the U. S.—Liberty H. Bailey	1.25
The Outlook of Nature—Liberty H. Bailey	1.00
The Lure of the Land—Harvey W. Wiley	1.40
Rural Life Problem in the U. S.—Sir Horace Plunket	1.25
Report of the Country Life Commission	.75
Poems of Country Life—Geo. S. Bryan	1.00
Chapters in Rural Progress—K. L. Butterfield	1.00
Rural Life and Education—E. P. Cubberley	1.50
A System of Tenant Farming and Its Results. Free farmers' bulletin 437, U. S. Department of Agriculture.	
The Country Church and the Rural Problem—K. L. Butterfield	1.00
The Church in the Open Country—Warren H. Wilson	.60
The Challenge of the Country—G. Waller Fiske	.75
Evolution of the Country Community—Warren H. Wilson	1.25
Rural Christendom—Chas. Roads	.90
The Day of the Country Church—J. O. Ashenhurst	1.00
Story of John Frederick Oberlin	1.25
Institutional Work for the Country Church—C. E. Hayward	.50
The Church and Country Life—Paul L. Vogt	1.00
Rural Church Message,—Men and Religion Movement	1.00
The Kingdom and the Farm—Harlan L. Feeman	.75
The Rural Church Movement—E. L. Earp	.75

Some Famous Country Parishes—E. S. Tipple.....
The Country Church (24-page pamphlet, showing rural church situation of Southern Presbyterians. Order from author), Dr. S. L. Morris, Atlanta, Ga..... .05
The Rural Church Problem (a 40-page pamphlet. Order from author), Charles Reed, Louisiana, Mo..... .10
Baptist Missions in the South—Victor I. Masters..... .55
The Church, A Country Life Defence, and other pamphlets—Professor E. C. Branson, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N. C.
University of Virginia Rural Life Bulletins.
Bulletins from your State Agricultural Department, and State Agricultural College.

APPENDIX A. (See Page 49)

RURAL MAIL SERVICE IN THE SOUTH.

Under date of October 20, 1916, Mr. J. K. Pickett, Acting Fourth Assistant Postmaster General, furnished us the following figures, showing by States, the rural mail routes and service in Southern Baptist Convention territory, as follows:

State.	Number of Routes	Approximate Number of Patrons Served.
Alabama	1,088	922,447
Arkansas	594	466,330
District of Columbia	7	13,294
Florida	198	202,000
Georgia	1,613	1,336,866
Kentucky	824	639,092
Louisiana	287	238,331
Maryland	413	281,009
Mississippi	907	693,234
Missouri	2,176	1,119,005
New Mexico	31	12,586
North Carolina	1,388	1,046,210
South Carolina	869	682,387
Oklahoma	1,061	633,218
Tennessee	1,610	1,185,852
Texas	2,018	1,490,368
Virginia	1,107	727,922
	16,191	11,690,151

Whole number of routes in operation in United States...42,927
Whole number of patrons served by these routes....26,307,686

APPENDIX B. (See Page 54)

INCREASE OF WHITE TENANTS IN THE COTTON BELT.

The following table shows by States the increase in the number of white tenants in the Cotton Belt between 1900 and 1910. The figures are taken from the Abstract of the Thirteenth Census, page 302:

States.	1910	1900	Percent. Increase.
North Carolina	63,148	55,785	13.2
South Carolina	34,926	28,633	22.0
Georgia	84,242	63,217	33.1
Florida	6,020	3,939	52,8
Alabama	65,017	48,973	32.7
Mississippi	41,886	30,253	38.4
Arkansas	58,381	46,178	26.6
Louisiana	22,530	18,531	21.5
Oklahoma	94,643	44,265	113.8
Texas	170,970	129,685	31.8
Total	641,763	469,559	36.7

APPENDIX C.

ENLISTMENT WORKERS HOME MISSION BOARD

NOVEMBER, 1916.

Rev. W. R. Bradshaw, Hickory, North Carolina.
Rev. J. D. Crain, Greer, South Carolina.
Rev. J. P. Harrington, Columbus, Miss.
Rev. W. J. Langston, Columbia, S. C., 135 Moore St.
Rev. C. E. Perryman, Hammond, La.
Rev. T. J. Moore, Purvis, Miss.
Rev. J. D. Ray, Birmingham, Alabama.
Rev. A. L. Stephens, Phil Campbell, Alabama.
Rev. T. J. York, Jasper, Ala.
Rev. F. R. Walters, Corbin, Ky.
Rev. A. C. Watkins, Ruston, La.
Rev. J. F. Edens, Jr., Atlanta, Georgia.

Nearly all of these Field Workers are supported jointly by a State Board and the Home Board. But Rev. C. E. Perryman is supported entirely by the Home Board, and Rev. J. F. Edens, Jr., entirely by the Georgia Board. The number of Workers and terms of their support change from time to time. It is now smaller than it has been for more than two years.

APPENDIX D. (See Page 162)

CLASSES OF CHURCHES AND GENERAL FACTS.

A survey of 256 District Associations, made by Dr. Arch C. Cree, Enlistment Secretary in 1913, showing classes and conditions in Southern Churches:

	FACTS ABOUT ONCE-A-MONTH CHURCHES											FACTS ABOUT COUNTRY CHURCHES.				
	Reporting, In Cities and Towns	Associations of More Than 500.	Country Churches.	Churches Meeting Every Sunday.	Churches Meeting Twice Monthly.	Churches Meeting Once-a-Month.	Resident Pastors.	Absentee Pastors.	Pastorless Churches Reported.	Disbanded in Last 5 Years.	Organized in Last 5 Years.	Average Salary.	Reporting Increase in Members.	Standing Still or Decreasing.	Number of Parsonages.	Average Value of Church Buildings.
Alabama	30	49	716	29	45	691	168	600	98	14	62	$81.00	410	194	10	$640
Arkansas	10	28	307	21	21	295	42	280	58	17	47	53.00	84	37		450
Florida	5	15	104	3	10	107	4	116	10	5	5	87.00	54	27	1	510
Georgia	33	70	841	27	41	845	35	942	34	7	66	104.00	344	140	3	875
Louisiana	14	30	244	12	33	231	7	505	50	16	61	87.30	110	69		910
Kentucky	23	45	523	58	55	457	15	258	35	12	41	90.00	127	20	1	690
Mississippi	12	8	270	4	12	243	51	224	3	2	18	110.00	120	88	3	850
New Mexico ..	3	16	41	10	7	40	7	38	10	22	48	150.00	10			450
North Carolina.	23	79	669	32	93	625	64	640	38	9	59	101.00	244	156	6	915
Oklahoma	18	39	289	35	79	216	20	251	67	35	87	82.60	133	58	1	850
South Carolina.	13	43	314	33	97	229	50	249	6		28	122.00	68	46	3	1,015
Tennessee	19	54	507	38	40	485	27	496	34	11	39	72.80	210	78	4	855
Texas	40	66	829	60	138	693	59	913	123	52	171	114.00	343	231	6	1,110
Virginia	13	65	412	59	174	248	43	262	52	10	31	145.00	92	104	19	1,250
Total	256	605	6,066	421	845	5,405	592	5,775	618	212	763	$94.50	2,349	1,249	57	$805

Survey blanks were sent to representatives in every Association in the Southern Baptist Convention. Returns were received from 256. The above figures are compiled from the 256 reports received and are representative of the Associations not reported, if not above the average.

APPENDIX E. (See Page 187)

BOOKS COUNTRY PREACHERS SHOULD HAVE.

At the request of the author, Dr. A. T. Robertson, Professor in the Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky, has furnished the following brief list of books suitable for country ministers, and, of course, others.

The prices of the books, postpaid, have been added by the Baptist World Publishing Company, of Louisville, Kentucky, and the books may be had either from this company or any Baptist book store.

	Price.
Robertson's Life and Letters of John A. Broadus	$ .60
E. B. Hatcher's Life of W. E. Hatcher	1.50
Ramsay's Teaching of St. Paul in terms of Present Day	3.00
Bruce's Training of the Twelve	2.50
Bruce's Humiliation of Christ	2.50
Bruce's St. Paul's Conception of Christianity	2.00
Findlay's Fellowship in the Life Eternal	2.50
Cobern's New Archaeological Discoveries	2.50
Matheson's Representative Men of the New Testament	1.50
Stalker's The Two St. Johns	.70
Robertson's Epochs in the Life of Paul	.60
Wilkinson's Paul and the Revolt Against Him	1.00
Stalker's Life of St. Paul	.70
Robertson's The Only Glory of the Ministry	1.25
Taylor's The Miracle of Jesus	1.05
Bruce's The Parabolic Teaching of Our Lord	2.00
Robertson's Teaching of Jesus Concerning God the Father	.70
Robertson's Keywords in the Teaching of Jesus	.60
Robertson's Studies in the New Testament	50c and .35
Orr's Resurrection of Jesus	1.50
Luckock, Special Characteristics of the Four Gospels	1.75

	Price.
Hill's Introduction The Life of Christ	.60
Ebershein's Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah	1.00
Robertson's Epochs in the Life of Jesus	.60
New Edition, Stalker's Life of Christ	55c and 1.25
Stalker's Imago Christi	1.25 and 1.50
Stalker's Trial and Death of Jesus Christ	1.25
Stalker's The Atonement	1.00
Robertson's John the Loyal	.60
Orr's The Virgin Birth of Jesus	1.50
Strong's Popular Lectures on the Books of the N. T.	1.05
Ramsay's Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament	3.00
Angus' Environment of Early Christianity	.80
Josephus	2.00
Dr. B. H. Carroll's Commentaries:	
Pastoral Epistles	1.75
Book of Genesis	2.25
Books of Numbers to Ruth	1.75
Book of Revelation	1.75
Books of Exodus and Leviticus	2.25
Book of Daniel	1.75
Four Gospels (two volumes), each	2.50
Acts (Interpretation of the English Bible)	2.25
James, 1st and 2nd Thessalonians—1st and 2nd Cor.	1.75
Gregg's Between the Testaments	.80
Breed's Preparation of the World for Christ	2.00
Maclear's Old Testament History	40c and 1.15
Maclear's New Testament History	40c and 1.15
The Gospel According to Mark, by J. J. Taylor	1.00
Hurlbut's Historical Atlas and Geography of the Bible	2.75
Newman's History of the Baptists (two volumes), each	1.75
The Expositor's Bible (A volume on each of the larger books of O. and N. T., per volume	.60
Ecclesiastes, Rev. Samuel Cox, D.D.	.60
Song of Solomon—and Lamentations, Rev. Prof. Adeney	.60
Isaiah in 2 Vols., Vol I., Chapters I-XXXIX; Vol. II, Chapters XL-LXVI, Prof. George Adams Smith, D.D.	.60

	Price.
Jeremiah, Chapters I-XX, with a sketch of his life and Times, Rev. C. J. Ball	.60
Ezekiel, Rev. Prof. John Skinner	.60
Daniel, Rev. F. W. Farrar, D.D.	.60
The American Standard Version of the Bible	.35 and upward
Walker's Comprehensive Concordance	$1.00 and 1.75
Broadus' Harmony of the Gospels	1.25
Broadus' Preparation and Delivery of Sermons	1.50
Broadus' Commentary on Matthew	2.25
Dargan's Doctrines of Our Faith	.60
Mullins' Axioms of Religion	1.00
Mullins' Baptist Beliefs	.60
Mullins' Why Christianity Is True	1.50
Sampey's Heart of the Old Testament	.60
McGlothlin's Guide to the Study of Church History	1.50
McGlothlin's History of Infant Baptism	.60
Gardner's Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress	1.25
Ramsay's Letters to the Seven Churches	3.00
Haldeman's The Signs of the Times	1.00
Cook's Pamphlet, All About Russellism	.10
Russellism Pamphlet by Ross	.10
Haldeman's Tract, Mental Assassination (on Christian Science)	.10
Haldeman's A Great Counterfeit (Pamphlet on Russellism)	.10
Wilkinson's Concerning Jesus Christ the Son of God	1.00
W. B. Riley's The Perennial Revival	1.00
Weston Bruner's The Fisherman	15c and .25

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